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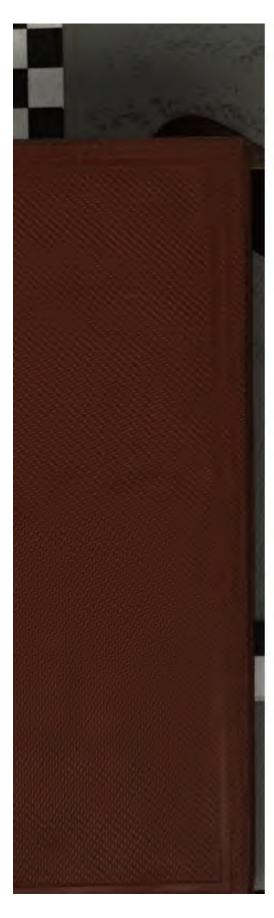
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THE LADIES OF LOVEL-LEIGH.

VOLUME III.



LONDON
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THE LADIES OF LOVEL-LEIGH.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF

"MARGARET AND HER BRIDESMAIDS," "THE VALLEY OF A HUNDRED FIRES,"

&c. &c.

"Out of God's choicest treasury we bring down New virtue to sustain all ill—new power To braid life's thorns into a regal crown. We pass'd into the outer world to prove The strength miraculous of Sisters' Love."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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THE LADIES OF LOVEL-LEIGH.

CHAPTER I.

"His voice and beauty,
Youth, carriage, and discretion must, from men
Endued with reason, ravish admiration.
From me they did."

JOHN FORD.

Rose's Journal.

I LIKE London. I like to drive about, and see all the carriages and horses, the crowds of people, the bustle, the fuss, the different expressions on different faces; and when any appear to me more deeply moved than others, I speculate upon the cause, no doubt vastly different from the reality.

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But I am tired of all this incessant running after fashions and fine clothes.

It is pretty and nice for an amusement, but to be the sole occupation of one's life, is painful. More painful is it still to see the worship of it. That old lady, of high rank, they said, -richer than rich, how she sat this morning, hour after hour, debating on some dresses to take down to the country. "No one was to have the same: Mrs. Watson must assure her of that. She heard she kept a young woman shut up, solely to invent new trimmings; she would give twenty guineas to the girl, if she invented a new and original fashion for her, to be called by her name." A sorry ambition that. And the anxiety of some of the girls to have their dresses sooner, better, more tasty, than some other girl who is to be at the same party.

Eve alone was justified in daily seeking a new dress; she had to weave hers out of leaves and flowers, every day fresh and sweet.

I think I should have liked that. It must be true that I am whimsical. How strong whims are! A few months ago, I thought this life happiness; now I am weary of it. I like to go to sleep, and dream. Sleep is a wondrous key put into a closed locked door, which, when opened, discovers beautiful fancies that arise into marvellous deeds, palaces of fairy structure, panoramas of exquisite cloud things, and sweet, soft, luscious music all the while; dream eyes see what wakeful ones cannot. I shall tell Mabel that: and I shall tell her I have had enough of this life. I wish now to go to the sea; so does Otto. He and I have not now to learn that when we two wish a thing 'tis very likely to be done. Mabel will be glad -glad, I know, to have her little wayward Rose back again; but I think Mrs. Watson was wrong to tell her of my lover. little dumb Rose has a lover! The handsome young cavalier who accompanied Ladv Arlington, and is her half brother, I believe;

very rich, very much in love with me! He writes little notes, and sends them to me. I only opened the first; all the others I give to Mrs. Watson. Sometimes they are thrown into the carriage window, sometimes they are given to the girls to give to me -those poor girls always to be dress-making. When we go back to Lovel-Leigh, when I am safe again by my father's grave, I shall have some of my present companions down, to see what the glorious country is like. What a wealth of trees-what a richness of green -what beauty in the budding chestnuts! The flowers, with their scented breath, rising up like pretty maidens, gaily clad; and the arbours latticed in with ivy meshes, through which we see the lake, and hear the cool sound of the plashing water; and then at night, when the lady moon comes out, and rides through the heavens, with the stately majesty of a virgin queen, all the little stars crowding to worship her, she looks down on the lake, and her image is reflected on its bosom

like a jewel; and the little stars do the same, making her rich with gems, while they tremble, with excess of happiness, at the beautiful sight. But here, here in this London—I am interrupted. A message from my Mabel to come to her; the carriage sent; Mr. Moore's housekeeper in it to take care of me. I don't anticipate evil, so I obey; bespeaking a happy evening, and the certainty that Otto and I will make a request that shall be granted. Then we shall behold the sea!

Two hours later.

My Mabel sent no message. This is the history of my adventure.

As I stepped into the carriage, I noticed the Arlington liveries, but only as he shut the carriage door did I see the footman was not Otto's.

I turned instantly to the woman seated in the carriage, whom I had understood to be Mr. Moore's housekeeper. It was not the housekeeper, but a stranger. As she saw that I was at once conscious of something wrong, she put her arm round me, and searching for my tablets, took them away. I made no resistance, I did not feel the desire to do so; no fear, but a little beating of the heart, as I suppose, other hearts beat, at the prospect of an adventure.

Mine, I presumed, consisted of being taken to Lady Arlington's; perhaps she wished to pour out upon me, who could not answer her, an uninterrupted torrent of wrath; perhaps my lover, her half-brother, would be there, and I should be made to listen to that which I refused to read.

I felt a little excited, but brave; and perhaps smiled to myself, with a little self-conceit, at the small good they would do themselves by this aggression upon my free will. Eyes often express scorn and defiance better than words can speak them.

Meantime, I looked perhaps with a little eagerness out of the carriage window. Once

or twice the woman pulled me back; but still, spite of my bravery, I was not without a sort of longing to see a face I knew.

It was eight o'clock in the evening, the hour that London dines. Through the vista of a street I saw an unusual sight for London; the rosy clouds canopying the sun as he sunk to rest; their exquisite colours causing the gay shops to look gaudy and meretricious; and those that were already lit up had a brilliancy borrowed from earthly tinsel, very different from the soft luminous splendour of the heavens. was a stoppage at the corner of this street, owing to a concourse of carriages going separate ways. As my eyes fell from beholding the glory above down into the street again, I saw, gazing intensely at me. a face I knew-not that of a friend, or one who could know me, but the face of a hero known to all his country. One but lately returned from the scene of his heroic deeds, and whose portrait was emblazoned all over

London—one whose exterior was a fitting shrine to inclose a soul large as the expanse of God's goodness, for it took in all the world, in the high perception of its duties.

We had read all about him, Mabel and I, and compared all his deeds; all he had done in war, his bravery, his humanity, and talent; all he had done in peace, his wisdom, his firmness, his promptitude; all he had done now at home, his modesty, his self-respect, his calmness under the ordeal of an ovation that might have turned the strongest head. A gush of joy crimsoned my face to think that this hero had looked at me earnestly with his hero, eagle eyes; what a glorious thing to tell Mabel!

We dashed on; how eagerly I looked back and caught his glance again! I thought, "He will remember me; I am no longer a stranger to him; his is a glance that can never forget."

Before the colour had left my face, we drew up, with all the flourish and arrogance

that London servants delight to show, at the door of a large, dull mansion in a somewhat narrow street; unlike its neighbours, the gas was not yet lighted in the doorway. It seemed the work of a moment for the carriage to stop, the door to open simultaneously with the house door, though there had been no knock or ring, and for the woman to inclose me tightly in her arms, and carry me into the house. Putting me down, she returned again to the carriage; the door closed behind me with an ominous bang, and I heard her drive away. Another woman appeared, who also seized me, as if I was something wild and savage, and bore me up stairs into a large and lofty drawingroom, already shut in from the soft evening light, and blazing with three enormous chandeliers, one in the centre, and one at either There was no feminine look about the room; all the furniture was arranged in set forms, as gentlemen's drawing-rooms are arranged at the clubs; there were no

work-baskets, pretty things; on one table lay newspapers folded and arranged. Putting me down, she turned and left the room, locking the door after her.

As I threw myself into a huge chair covered with crimson velvet, the house shook with a loud rat-ta-tap at the door.

I could distinguish the running of feet in the house, and whispering. It occurred to me to try and open one of the window-shutters—they were barred and fastened with a strength that resisted every effort of feminine hands. Again a rat-ta-tap louder than before. I returned to my chair, so far touched with a sense of fear that I thought it safer to endure my fate sitting than standing. Rat-tat went the knocker; and at last it appeared that the knocking was heeded, for the door was opened, and I heard voices in expostulation and excuse.

They approached nearer; the words became distinct.

"I take the responsibility on my own

shoulders; if the young lady is going to Lady Arlington's, why is she brought to the house of Mr. Everard?"

I did not hear the reply to this; but the first voice spoke out again in clear tones, like a bell.

"You lie, fellow! I see it in your countenance; take me to the young lady; I will hear from her own lips if she entered this house at her own will."

I heard the words in answer.

"Mr. Everard is here; you had better see him."

"No; I will see the young lady first; tell Mr. Everard to meet me in her presence."

So saying, I heard a firm step coming nearer and more near; he tried the door—it was a folding door, though but of ordinary size, and, as I said before, had been locked. Impatient at this, I presume, with one vigorous push it burst open, and I saw enter he who had looked at me in the street—the hero, Sir Arthur Castleford.

Premising, before he entered, that, whatever fate had been intended me, I was now relieved from it, I had recovered my selfpossession, and sat enthroned, with as much dignity as my little frame would permit, in the great velvet-covered arm-chair.

On seeing him, I rose, and courtesied, as it was my duty to do, to one so illustrious, and then I enthroned myself again.

He bowed lowly, and taking another chair, placed it close by me and sat down.

"I must entreat your pardon for the abruptness of my entrance; your youth and innocence must be my excuse. I think you scarcely know in whose house you are?"

I shook my head emphatically.

"I thought so," he answered eagerly. "Then you pardon me?"

I took his hand in mine, and gently pressed it.

"Pray don't be alarmed. Let me hear you speak; let me hear you say you are glad I followed you. Struck with the lovely child-face looking up at the sky with a wistful, perplexed gaze mingled with admiration, you passed before my eyes only to vanish again. Seeing the Arlington liveries, I felt as by an instinct there was a something wrong, and followed as quickly as I could. I knocked down two or three people in my haste, but they were so good as to pardon me."

Never had I seen so beautiful a face—beautiful with goodness, frankness, strength—such beneficent, kindly eyes—such power of brow—such sweetness and mobility about the mouth.

I did not wonder at any one pardoning him anything, if he asked the pardon with the smile with which he looked at me.

At this moment Mr. Everard entered, looking violently flushed and annoyed; the two, as they stood together (for Sir Arthur rose), might have embodied the angel Gabriel and Satan confronting each other, as in Milton's description—the dark,

Spanish-looking Mr. Everard wickedly handsome, and the fair Saxon hero with his sparkling blue eyes emitting forth the light of a lofty anger that disdained any concealment.

He made a sign as if to demand an explanation.

"My sister will be here directly," he muttered in answer.

"Then I will await her arrival," said the other, and again sat down in the chair near me.

"There is not the slightest need that you should do so," exclaimed Mr. Everard, hotly. "This is a private matter, in which you have no concern."

"Explain to me, in any terms you like, that you have a right to retain this young lady here, and I leave directly."

"She is here by appointment."

He was stopped by the angry gesture with which I refuted this statement.

"Everard, you are my kinsman, and I

wish to believe you. I cannot imagine your sister has anything in common with this pretty child, for she is nothing more. She is alarmed, naturally. Give her time to recover, that she may speak, and tell her real wishes."

I looked round the room for writing materials. He watched me with eagerness.

Meantime Mr. Everard again spoke.

"I will acknowledge to you, cousin, that she is here without her own consent. She is a young milliner from Mrs. Watson's establishment. I saw her there acciden-Since that time I have tally but once. endeavoured by every means in my power to engage her attention. I have written to her repeatedly. She cannot be ignorant of the admiration I have for her, as I have never yet lost an opportunity of showing Though at first I received encouragement, lately she has vouchsafed me none; and in despair I consulted my sister. She tried to penetrate Mrs. Watson's establishment, for the purpose of seeing the young lady, who is of good birth, and of making to her honourable proposals on my behalf. But she was quite as unsuccessful as my-You have but to look at the object before you, and you will not wonder at my Totally without the means infatuation. of making her understand that I desired to ask her to be my wife—at a loss to be assured she received my letters - my sister devised this plan, so that I might have an opportunity of pleading my ardent attachment vivâ voce; and after allowing me a sufficient time to do so, she was to call, and, together, we would restore the lovely girl to her present home."

"As dishonourable and base a design as ever entered a human heart," exclaimed Sir Arthur. "You will allow me to take you home?" turning to me.

I sprang up, was at his side in a moment, grasping his arm.

"Miss Lovel," said Mr. Everard, "give

me at least the hope that I may see you The commonest laws of courtesy demand that you should listen to honourable proposal of marriage, and vouchsafe some reply. You will, if it is but by one word, extenuate to my cousin this act (too arbitrary, perhaps, of bringing you without your permission to my house), by confessing I had no other means of proffering you my hand. I knew not your guardians, your relations, your past life, your future prospects. Ι nothing but that you possessed a loveliness which enslaved while it enchanted me; and to make you mine at all risks was the sole ambition of my heart. Surely such disinterested love will plead for me?"

"Disinterested, Sir!" interrupted Sir Arthur, haughtily.

"Yes, disinterested. A young person from the establishment of a milliner may consider an offer of marriage from a gen-

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tleman of my consideration and wealth disinterested!"

- "She does not, evidently," replied Sir Arthur, half smiling at the anger and indignation I expressed.
- "I will take nothing but words. Speak, Miss Lovel! If my suit is distasteful, say so; if you have hope to give me—oh! be speedy."

I made signs for a pencil, which Sir Arthur gave me; and I wrote in large letters on the margin of a newspaper, one hand still on the arm I had clutched—

- "I am dumb."
- "Dumb!" they both exclaimed aloud the one in horror, the other in pity.

The latter was the first to speak.

"My poor little maiden! Thank God, I followed the impulse of my nature. Sweet-speaking, pitiful eyes! I will do all you say. Go, Everard; go as quickly as you can. Bring my mother here. You know she lives not twenty yards from this house.

I was on my way to dine with her when smitten with the beauty of this little face. Ask her to come here just as she is. She is a mother who would walk from one end of London to the other bare-foot, if I willed it."

Mr. Everard rushed out of the room as if glad to escape from an object of horror.

"Have you always been dumb? Never deaf? Excuse me -don't think me impertinent; I am Sir Arthur Castleford. Oh, you know that! So you know I am a most spoiled and arbitrary creature. You don't require speech; I understand your eyes far better than some people's words. You like me, then, and will take me for a brother? I prize the honour as much as any I ever had. I have sent for my mother because women are so quick to understand, and she will take you home, and be altogether a true mother to my fair little sister. You smile, and are my sister dislike to happy. Would

tell me whether she will favour cousin Leopold Everard's suit? No: no!-emphatically no! I should say that He is one of the richest commeans. moners in England-still no! He is reckoned the handsomest man in London -again no! not in your eyes, I presume. I am bound to acknowledge, as far as the young men of the present day go, he is a very good specimen. Hitherto I have thought him honourable, straightforward, and not without many proper ideas of his duty in this world, though at present but feebly demonstrated. Still that ominous no! Acknowledge that I have done my best for my kinsman in his absence? Yes! Hah! now we come to affirmatives. I ask some more questions? Yes! are no milliner's apprentice, but a young Yes! One of the Miss Lovels, lady? about whose property there is to be a trial? Yes! One is with Lord Arling-Yes! She disdained her fiery ton?

ladyship? Yes! When you smile, your face ripples all over into dimples. you see, you owe it to her, not my cousin, this little adventure. Yes. She wished to revenge herself. You must know that, stumbling upon her one day in a fit of rage, I heard all about it; and the name of Lovel, spoken by Everard, gave me the clue to this adventure. Everard is very young, and madly in love. No! come, be lenient; excuse him a little. know that when I love, when I have that delightful disease, I will gain my love, though a host should oppose me. I will make her mine (that is, if she loves me) if I had to undermine a mountain to get at her. Here is my dear mother, in good time to save me further rhapsodies."

And an elderly lady entered the room, whose countenance bore on it the expression and stamp that she was the noble mother of a nobler son.

I ran to her, and put up my face to be

kissed, which she did, at first surprised, and then again tenderly; and she took me on her knee. She was tall, and altogether framed on a very large scale, though not stout.

"What a pretty little child!" she said.

Then her son explained the whole thing; and seeing that I frowned as he mockingly alluded to my being a milliner, he repeated it, laughing. So I again took the pencil, and, with that odd, unaccountable feeling which makes us conceited about that which we need least be, I wrote:

"Mrs. Watson took me without any premium."

"Oh, this is delightful!" exclaimed Sir Arthur, laughing more than ever. "My little adopted sister is so clever, she had to pay no premium for the privilege of learning dress-making."

Half sulky, I ran back to Mrs. Castleford's knee, and hid my face in the operacloak she had thrown round her. "You are too young a brother to take these liberties," said Mrs. Castleford reprovingly. "Now, go directly and order me a carriage, to take this little one home."

"Mother," he answered, half coaxingly and low, "ask her to dine with you. I know that meal is waiting, and Osmond beside himself with wonder at the delay. And, Everard, will you join us? Leave word with your servant to inform your sister when she comes."

I may as well remark, no message was sent to him from Lady Arlington's while I was there. So I think he told a falsehood in saying he expected her.

I consented to dine, and Mrs. Castleford ordered a carriage to take me home afterwards; and I liked dining there very much. I did not care for Mr. Everard's admiration, which he lost no opportunity of showing, now that he had recovered the shock of discovering my muteness.

Though I was little, I was of a proud spirit; and, from having to use signs for words, was skilled enough in showing how entirely indifferent I was to any feelings he might express, whether of love or aversion. At nine o'clock I was to leave, and I thought it came too soon.

My manner seemed to amuse Sir Arthur. A joyous spirit flings happiness around like incense. As we entered the carriage, his mother and I, to go, he asked my permission to call in the morning, to inquire after my welfare; but, thinking Mr. Everard would probably do the same, I wrote down that I must go early to Cheam to see my sister, lest she should hear of my adventure before she saw me.

Mrs. Castleford delivered me into Mrs. Watson's kind hands, whose mingled affection, deference, and agony of mind at what had occurred, raised me, I saw, very much in that lady's estimation. To command respect is better than love.

CHAPTER II.

"Freedom and rest, thou wouldest have,
Freedom is service meet;
And rest of soul is but a name
For toil amid life's heat.
"In the outward world 't is vain to seek
The Eden thou would'st win;

That ancient Paradise is gone,
Thine Eden is within."

J. M. W.

Pamela's Journal - continued.

WHEN I returned to Miss Woodville's presence, there was the echo of a sob in her voice, and her lip quivered still. She was gentle and kind to me, praising the tea, and bread and butter, a thing unusual with her. After the tea-things were removed, I played on the piano for an hour. Then she said, "Come, get your work; I

have told you the first part of my story to please myself; you must hear the latter for your own good.

"My mother died, as I said, but I did not tell you that nothing became her in her life like her leaving it. This made me mourn for her, regardless of freedom and revenge, both arbitrary passions in their way.

"I sent for Aurelia, who had added to her sins, in my eyes, by having a baby—a boy—your Ferdy.

"Dr. Home was wise enough to warn the Bank to give no more credit to Mr. Wraxall, and so we had it all our own way; our turn was uppermost in Fortune's wheel. But we had this much respect for the dead, that we made no unseemly use of our power until after the funeral.

"I had her taken home to lie by our father, which caused words to arise between me and Dr. Home; he thought it a waste of money! But when all was over, and every last duty paid according to my wishes, I beckoned to my sister to come into the carriage and sit beside me, Mr. Wraxall and the two doctors coming up as if to accompany us.

- "'No,' said I, 'here we part. Dr. Home, I shall take Aurelia to your house, and leave her there; but I don't associate with any but gentlemen, and I'll never enter your doors again. Mr. Wraxall, provided you never address me by word or by letter, and never intrude your most detestable presence in my sight, I will allow you a hundred a-year. Drive on, coachman.'
 - "And I never saw either again.
- "I left Aurelia, as I said. On parting, I warned her to consult some good lawyer, and get her money tied up for the benefit of her child or children, if she should be so absurd as to have any more. To perpetuate such a sorry race as the Homes, was, to my mind, a disgrace to the rest of mankind.

"'You will find,' I continued, 'that Dr. Home will be so overwhelmed at the vastness of the sum he has got the fingering of, that it will turn his brain. advantage of this stage of idiotcy, and persuade him to make a settlement. can alarm him into it by saying, if he does not, Mr. Wraxall will bully him until he gives up part to him-perhaps go to law. If that wont do, offer him a thousand pounds just to do what he likes with, on condition the rest is tied up. 'Tis astonishing the effect it will have upon him, the fingering of a thousand pounds in notes and gold. He will think life too short to spend the half of it. I am going abroad until the lease is up of Redheugh. baby had been a girl, I would have adopted it at once, and made it my heir; but I will have nothing to do with boys-ugh. Good-bye; I am sorry for you. If you had not been in such a hurry, you might now have been as happy and free as I am.'

"Thus we parted. And I went abroad, travelling about from place to place, staying for months where I happened to please myself, or met with people that I liked. But let me tell you, Pamela, that was very seldom. I had reason to think, in intercourse with other people, my poor mother was not the silliest person in the world. I am not sure if I don't respect those who have no brains, more than those who have too much. Why did God make us, to deliver us over to deceit, folly, cupidity, vanity, and every other species of infirmity? I wearied of them all, and yet grew tired of the sameness of my life; all things being to please myself, I felt as if smothered in down. I did not care much for scenery, but so much as it had to do with human life; flowers, stars, rivers, mountains, woods and valleys were associated only in my mind with those of fellow-travellers like myself. Odd things - fairies, demons, ghosts-must have a smack of humanity

about them, before I cared to interest myself concerning them. Of course I felt a want; some folks might say I pined for love. Let them say it; God has, above all creatures, endowed us with gregariousness; and women are like the ivy, always in want of something to cling to. It might be that yearning of love which oppressed me. But, Pamela, I conquered it; no matter now; out of seventeen offers of marriage made to me in my lifetime, I never hesitated to say 'No' to any one of them. My loneliness, weariness, fatigue of life, was better to bear than an indissoluble tie with one of those creatures who bore the same appearance, wore the same sort of clothes, smoked, talked big, looked bigger, in exactly the same way as Mr. Wraxall. have heard it said that, to know people, you must love them, accord them the highest place in your confidence and affections. I never made the experiment; I found everybody much alike, made up

of all sorts of different earths. Part pure, part coarse, barren sand, and rich loam, wherein virtues and vices throve one against the other. I was in many respects much the same myself; but I was always truthful. Though God has blinded me, I never told a lie.

"So, failing to interest myself in human beings, I tried literature. As for science, philosophy, poetry, art, I admired what was beautiful, pleasant, clever, but I cared to know nothing about their origin. The end of things was more to my taste than the beginning. I tried light reading; but as no novel depicted scenes of more vivid life than had occurred to myself, I could not interest myself in them. Besides, 't is such a narrow road between facts and fiction, I feared to lose that integrity of character upon which I prided myself.

"So, all things failing, I turned to God, and asked Him to fill my heart with a sense of security and happiness. 'It is

the feeble soul only,' I said to myself, 'that has no heart-burnings. A large heart sighs for Heaven, for Heaven only can satisfy it. A noble spirit exercises itself in magnanimity, and such magnanimity must be obtained by exercising the soul in great temptations, high thoughts, and deeds that can trace their origin from the Essence of God.'

"I cultivated the society of religious people. I consulted dead and living Divines. At one time I gave my soul into the keeping of a warm-hearted, enthusiastic clergyman of the Church of England, who comforted me for my apathy and dulness by saying, 'The heart is never so near awakening as when plunged in deepest sleep.' It remained asleep for anything he did towards awakening it; and indeed I perceived, in most of his congregation, that they were so industrious in believing in God on Sundays, they forgot Him all the rest of the week.

"I then tried the Papist creed, being impressed by the remark of a priest dilating upon an image of our Saviour nailed to the cross:—

"'The hands are nailed back to typify to us that the riches of this earth are not to be grasped. We may partake of them as from a bunch of hyssop placed upon a reed, and put to our mouths. The feet nailed to the cross, so are our feet nailed to the path of duty, let it be rugged and narrow as a piece of rough wood. The heart pierced, opened, to let out the evil within it; so must our hearts be pierced with sorrow.'

"I desired a mental crucifixion, and bought myself a cross to worship. I was recommended to try a convent, where alone I could find the perfect bliss I desired; but I asked, 'Why must I make myself defunct on earth before the time decreed by God?' If it was laudable to bury oneself alive in a convent, it was surely lawful to go out of the world altogether when tired of it.

"I sought out the histories of those famous ones who have been praised through all generations for killing themselves. In the search, I found few did so, who had not better have lived on; and I discover it still more that many people existed, and suffered, bereft of hope or pleasure, and they were lauded and deserved laudation, above all.

"'The coward sneaks to death; the brave live on."

"This maxim was much to my mind.

"Well, Pamela, do you picture me to yourself in your mind's eye? Twenty-five years old; prettier than most women—why may I not praise God's work?—clever, in as far as quickness of wit and a perception of character went; no great depth of reasoning; no power to condense my intellect on one subject; no one thing more prominent in my character than another, so as to elevate me on a little hillock in the land of fame, for men to wonder at, admire, and envy.

I was an ordinary woman; my nature just soured when it was at its flow of luscious youth. All I wanted was happiness; where could I find her? I did not side so much for myself as to allow that I was faultless; but in truth I had not yet learned that vinegar can never turn again to wine. Providence had designed that I was to be ill-tempered, and I know the ill-tempered cannot be happy. So I am like the summer-house in the garden, that Giles told us of this morning, 'It wore a foine hoose still, but a wanted a soomit.'

- "' What's that, Giles?'
- "'Whoy! I doan't disactly kna, Missus, boot in d'fare wether, it doo let in noi raion, and i' the wat, it do let a' the raion roon out.'
- "I was nothing; of no use to any one. I gave no sunshine to any heart; and was only so far praiseworthy that I let storms pour over me, and from me, without

troubling people to save me from the drenchings they gave me.

"I felt some indistinct gleams of the happiness of duty fulfilled. What was my duty? I experienced now and then a glow of good; but as the glow evaporated, so did the good. 'Ignorance,' I read, 'is the only road the idle walk in,' and I tried knowledge again, only to discover that if I pursued it at the rate I did, about the end of my life I should just have found the key, and fitted it into the lock that was to open and tell me all things.

"It was about this time that help came to me — I will say, from the hand of God, though death is the commonest event of life.

"I received a letter from the wife of the man who had a lease of Redheugh. He was dead; and she wished to be relieved from the agreement that bound them to keep it for nearly four years more. I was as pleased at this news as if I had been showered over with blessings; and, in my hurry to return, acquitted the family of the forfeit the law allowed me for breaking their lease, and forgave them, without seeing the house, all endamagement and waste of my property.

"One might suppose that the late visit of death to the house would warn them not to sin by wholesale. I found Redheugh a wreck; they had had a sale of their things, which, to prevent their goods being damaged by removal, I had permitted to take place at Redheugh, waiting myself most impatiently at Paris until it was over; and then I returned to find that they had taken advantage of this to sell my property as well as their own. I had no idea of sitting down calmly wronged. I set off after them without waiting to see Aurelia, and got all those things I most valued back again. I made the woman (who sickened me with her affectation of grief, 'How could she, at such a time, think of such things? It was most sad, truly; but her heart was so crushed, she was even then wholly bewildered.') sign a paper

containing a list of all those things that were mine. I got the auctioneer to give me a schedule of the sum for which theywere sold. I made her repay me the money; and then I employed a solicitor to go round and collect them all, which he did with very little loss. Then I sat down happy, really happy, spite of the upbraiding letters my late tenant poured in upon me for ruining her character.

"I had worked hard; I had done what was right; I was happy. Then I sent for Aurelia, and was pleased, poor soul, at the joy and delight she manifested at seeing me.

"She was a striking instance of the evils of unbefitting companionship—dressed in tawdry finery, with a flow of slang phrases of which I knew not the meaning. I think even her mother would have been shocked to witness the change in her pretty Aurelia.

"' And you look so nice, dear—so fashionable; and haven't you never got a beau yet? The doctor was thinking every day we should hear of your being a foreign countess, or something grand.'

- "'And how is Doctor Home?"
- "'Oh, very well; he has given up doctoring long ago. I wasn't going to allow that, and we keeping our carriage.'
 - "'Did you have your money tied up?'
- "'Yes, of course, Olympia; we had some put by.'
 - "' How much?'
- "' Well, about half; and I wish we hadn't done that—we are much pinched this year, and they say we haven't another penny to spend. I can't tell how it is; neither can the doctor.'
- "'You have spent 14,000l., besides your income, during the five years of my absence.'
- "'So they say; but I am sure I can't tell how; neither can the doctor. We are not extravagant.'
 - "' You have only that one brat?'
- "'No, only the one; but oh! Olympia, he is such a beauty, such a darling; and I never was parted from him a night before.'
 - "I could not withstand her tears. I

thought, after all, he must be my heir. Aurelia looks old, and very ill; he may be left to my care. I had better see him at once, and get fond of him while he is yet a child and innocent.

"So, unknown to her, I sent my servant off for him; and we were at tea when he arrived.

"Pamela my sister was just putting her cup to her lips, when we heard, outside the door, the pretty, soft tones of a child's voice, full of glee and happiness. The cup fell from her hands; one look of gratitude she gave to me, and rushed to the door, just in time to receive into her arms a boy so beautiful—I never saw sculpture, painting, or nature show one so fair.

"'And, Mamma dear,' he said, kissing her again and again, 'where is my Auntie, who was so kind as to send for me? where is my darling Auntie.' Little hypocrite even then!

"But I took him at once into my arms,

and into my heart: I rejoiced in his beauty, his precociousness, his little vanities and follies. Whatever influence Dr. Home may have had on his wife, he had none on the boy. Such a finished little gentleman—such an epicure—such refinement in all his ideas—so much elegance in all his movements, with a natural politeness and grace that amazed as much as it delighted me!

- "He was dressed in the most costly style.
- "'He won't wear anything shabby or out of fashion,' whispered his mother, delighted with my admiration.
 - "'Auntie,' said the young exquisite, 'what room am I to have? I should like to see that all my things are properly unpacked.' And as he coaxingly rubbed his head against my shoulder, I saw that he had my father's eyes and eyebrows; and I kissed him rapturously for the likeness.
 - "'Auntie, I shall be very fond of you. I hope I may live here a great deal; I don't like York; the people are vulgar.'

- "' This may be your home, if you like; and you may choose your own room,' said I, fairly overcome.
- "'Thank you, Auntie; I will do that tomorrow. But I must have my dog; and when I want him, I must have Algy to play with.'
 - "'Who is Algy?'
- "'Oh! never mind,' answered his mother, hastily; "come, Ferdy, come with me; it is time you were in bed.'
 - "Ferdinand was my father's name.
- "During Aurelia's absence with her boy, I sat swimming high on the tide of happiness. All the love that by rights my nature ought to have felt for the other sex, hitherto pent up, or driven back, I now poured out for this boy. He was a little angel, and had nothing to do with the monster man. How coaxing yet imperious he was. I loved him all the better for it. I did not mourn so much now for the waste of Aurelia's money. I had never

spent half my proper yearly income, and would now be more careful than ever; I would save everything for my boy. I had looked him carefully over, and outside there was not a trace of Dr. Home; I might love him to the utmost limits of infatuation.

- "There was much wanting about Redheugh to make it habitable. The property, I had always heard, was capable of great improvements. I had now a specified work to perform—a duty to do. Hitherto I had not exactly quarrelled with my fate, but I had quarrelled with myself for making nothing out of it. Now I blessed fate, congratulated myself, and was in love and harmony with all the world.
- "'Who is this Algy?' I asked Aurelia, as soon as she returned.
 - "'Oh! only a boy who dotes on Ferdy.'
 - "'Where does he live?'
 - "' With us, to be sure.'
 - "' Whose child is he?'

44 THE LADIES OF LOVEL-LEIGH.

- "'Well, I don't know. I never asked; did not you know that he was always there?'
- "'From the time you first married, no; but I was rarely in your house.'
 - "'I found him there.'
 - "'Did Dr. Home tell you of him?"
- "'No. I heard a child crying one day, moaning; I could not bear to hear it; so I went all over the house, until I found an ordinary-looking little boy, about six years of age, seated on a sort of crib, still in his night-clothes, though it was almost one o'clock. He looked frightened out of his wits when he saw me, and tried to hide himself under the bed-clothes. But Ι pulled him out, and gave him a kiss, and asked him what he cried for? He said. Jane wouldn't bring his clothes. long had he been without them?" I asked. "Two days." "And why was he not to have them?" "Because of the new Missus; she was not to see him, or she would cut his head

off." So I comforted him as well as I could, and said I would go and ask Jane for his clothes. "But you won't let the new Missus come near me," he said. "I will take care of you, at all events," I answered.

"'Iwent to Jane, and asked for the clothes of a little boy I had found in one of the She stared very much, and looked greatly frightened; but as I said no more. she silently gave them; and I went back with them, and dressed the poor little fellow. And you never saw anything so pretty as his gratitude, poor little man. You know I am fond of children; I thought it best to make no further inquiries of any body; and though the doctor got extremely red and confused when he saw him sitting on my knee, he said nothing. One day I asked what the boy should call me; and he said, after somethought - Aunt. So that 's how it has been ever since; and you know as much as I know, except that you never saw such a grateful, good, affectionate boy in your life. There's nothing he won't do for Ferdy or me; and he is wonderfully clever, though he is little more than twelve years old. He sits up reading late at night, and the doctor can't pose him with any question whatever. We were to have articled him to a lawyer this year, but we had not the money.'

"Disposed to be kind to all who loved Aurelia and my beautiful boy, I sent on the following day for this other boy.

"He was a nice, quiet, thoughtful lad, with good features and good manners; but, Pamela, he had a head of hair, all wisped up as you see a cock of hay, and so had Dr. Home.

"And now there you see your dear Ferdy, and his beloved Algy Rivers, from the earliest time that I knew them. From the very beginning of their lives, each seemed necessary to the other; yet they never met but each became the evil genius to each. We deal ill with our best feelings, implanted

by Nature; we don't aid her to bring them to perfection. If we have talents—a genius for music, for painting, for art of any sort, how we devote ourselves to its development! No expense is spared, no trouble avoided, no labour considered too much. But for the talents of the soul—for truth, for honour, for mercy—they are left unnoticed, perhaps unknown; and become choked with a wilderness of weeds, that stifle them at last."

CHAPTER III.

"My heart is like the ocean,
It hath storm, and ebb, and flow;
But many a pearl is hidden
In its silent depths below."
HEINRICH HEINE.

Mabel's Journal.

I FEEL something like the flowers drowned in rain-drops. My little Rose has taken her first flight from beneath my sight, and gone to Weymouth with Mrs. Castleford. They wished us to accompany them; but Otto's health is not yet sufficiently reestablished to bear "the strength," as they term it, of the sea air. Besides, this trial may come on any day; and I may be summoned to appear in Court. Mr. Moore

intends to spare me, if possible; but the rancour of the other side, which seems to gather strength with every fresh display of it, prompts them to offer every annoyance, and urges them to try every provocation. Only yesterday Mr. Rivers way-laid me, in my walk with Otto, to point out, as he said, the infatuation of my conduct.

- "I have come, Miss Lovel, for the last time, to beseech you not to force me to this trial. The knowledge I possess of my claims, the sanction of the first lawyers of the realm as to their justice, move me to so much pity that I forget the dignity of my self-respect, and come to plead with you once more."
- "For the last time, Mr. Rivers?" I asked.
- "For the last time, on my honour," he answered.
- "Then, Sir, hear the last words I wish to address to you. I put my faith in the vol. III.

trial about to be laid before the judgment Failing that, I trust to of the world. time, to change, to enable me to bear my And still further, fate as becomes me. Sir, when God shall see fit to send the Angel of Death for me, I shall look upon him as the harbinger of happiness, releasing me from the persecutions of a man whom I know not whether I contemn or scorn the most. You may boast of your strength, your power to annoy, my weakness, and repugnance to retaliate, but my weakness will wear out your strength -my forbearance will out-measure your malignity. I have done. Henceforward we are total strangers."

Mr. Moore has thought it necessary to appoint a policeman to guard our walks, Miss Arlington being timid. I know not what the man can do to me that I should fear.

Yet I must not boast, remembering the escape of my little Rose.

How beneficent a woman is Mrs. Castleford! She came down to ask in person for the favour, the happiness, of the society of our little mute darling, and awoke in my heart a tumult of happy feelings by her praises of her. If her son is like her, I do not wonder that Rose is so infatuated; according to his picture he must be.

Mrs. Castleford gave me a description of our little Rose on that eventful night.

She saw, on first entering, a little thing like a sea-nymph coiled up in a great armchair, but seated with a sort of stateliness and minute majesty that was most bewitching. All at once, when she saw Mrs. Castleford, the royal air vanished; she sprung up like a bird, and was in a moment the loveliest child ever seen; so wayward are her moods. And at dinner the disdain with which she looked down Mr. Everard's admiration excited the astonishment of Mrs. Castleford at her powers of expression, joined to so much loftiness of

feeling, while it delighted Sir Arthur. Everard had insulted her; by how much in reality, or how far in intention, it was not of moment to her to inquire; 't was enough that she had been insulted. Mr. Everard! he might turn out a prince in disguise, a hero, a god; he was evermore to be nothing to her, but the man who had put a slight upon her. And Mrs. Castleford says that, notwithstanding her calamity, his love for her increased with her disdain for him. There is something so graceful in her movement, so ardent in her expression, so fascinating in everything she does, that it was a question if her dumbness was an evil. Speech might have turned her into an ordinary mortal. At present, as Mr. Everard no doubt felt, and Sir Arthur declared, which Mrs. Castleford reiterated, there never was so bewitching a little being.

And she was so happy to go—so full of her hero—so fond of Mrs. Castleford,

now a friend of six weeks' standing. Moreover, it is a satisfaction that her whim of dress-making is over. She will take warning, little heedless thing, and not desire to place herself in a position that brought such sad results to her.

Mr. Everard has gone abroad with Lady Arlington.

We have now only to bear with patience the lingering issue of the law. And I may not be impatient when I think of Pamela. God grant her some fruit for her profound, inexhaustible depth of endurance.

And my lot so different, hitherto seeing my Rose nearly every day; enjoying the society of a friend such as Miss Arlington is to me; the happiness of witnessing the unbroken improvement in my charge which is of so interesting a nature, 'tis happiness sufficient to watch it day by day—his character opening as a bud unfolds its leaves, gradually, in God's good time, bursting into full flower—a

flower of perfect promise, as far as we can judge.

He has the perception of goodness so strongly developed, that in no moment of weakness or pain does he forget the right thing to do. A nobleman by birth, he is equally so by nature.

"Spare," said he to me one day, "the buds, and select only full-blown flowers. You would not wish God to gather Rose and me."

"The clouds this evening remind me of dreams," he remarked at another time; "they are light, airy nothings, and are passing as quickly from our sight as my dreams from my memory. And yet I see and hear pleasant things in them—faint, soft music, the air of which sometimes haunts me, and sometimes flies for ever; but nothing is so pleasant as the sound of distant laughter. It seems to presage that happiness is coming."

The delight of Mr. Moore at seeing, day

by day, the son of his dearest friend recovering from the sad fate of ill-used infancy, is not to be told. His interest in my cause redoubles itself, though it is well known Otto's improvement arises more from the judicious orders of the physician, which Miss Arlington and I have but to carry out as they are given us.

It is a pleasant sight to see in one so young as Otto all the forms of courtly society so innate, while the simple ingenuousness of youth shines through all, like a star of virtue. He is slow and thoughtful in passing judgment upon anything, saying, with a grave smile, "There is no appeal from the House of Lords. That is the badge of our nobility, and we must never disgrace it."

The leaves are falling now fast.

"Come, Aunt Emily," he said; "come, there is a new carpet laid every day for you to tread upon; and a wonderful cloud-cliff has reared itself against the sky. Come

and see the new pictures that God has painted for you to-day."

"His father was so poetical!" she told me, her lip quivering. Poor thing! her love had been chilled, almost extinguished. But now, separated by the barrier of the grave, it did not seem to her wrong to let it burst forth, and sprinkle its rich essence over the head of the living boy.

"Poetry is language set to music,"
Otto answered her; "and you know I
love music."

It seems almost as if the brain, enchained by some mischance from executing its work, had yet, under the crust of apathy and fear, developed itself into a power and strength that had at last broken through the barrier, and burst upon us with the full-grown reason of a man.

John Clifford has been here to-day. He is uneasy with regard to Ferdy.

Twice has Mr. Home been down to the neighbourhood of Redheugh lately. Ever

since the plot against Rose (yet with that Mr. Rivers had nothing to do), John has been suspicious of everybody moving about his little ladies.

Miss Rose is safe. Under the vigilant eye of Sir Arthur Castleford, he will be a bold man who harms her.

But with Pamela it is different. She is isolated from us all, and has a nature so trusting, she has but to be told a thing to believe it.

John went to see Ferdy, who, unable to refrain from talking, complained to him largely of the unkind way he was treated by every one. Rivers would give him no money. Pamela had gone to Miss Woodville's on purpose to befriend him, and get him reinstated in her good opinion; and though she had been there nearly nine months, he did not see the slightest sign of the reconciliation promised him. In fact, he began to think she went there t please herself; probably she repented

giving him her fortune, and thought it but fair so to ingratiate herself with Miss Woodville as to take his place as her heir. But he would not stand that; he would go to law as well as Rivers; and he would make her feel, as Rivers made Mabel feel, that they would have their rights, "let them be ever so determined the other way."

It seems—Oh! sad thing!—that poor Ferdy is now descending the last step of the road to destruction. He is often intoxicated; and, but that his evidence is so essential at the trial, Mr. Rivers would at once let him go his own way, without further effort to stay him.

Will it be possible to save him? "Effectual fervent prayer availeth much." Oh, Ferdy! our father's dear friend, how many prayers, for how many years, have been offered up for thee! and for just so many years have you been descending, step by step, towards the pit of destruction!

His life is a lesson we may well study. The original nature that he inherited—the education he received—the teachings from the hand of God—were they of no avail? It would almost seem as if he thought his present state ruin, his hereafter hopeless; and, in contemplation of this awful fate, he rushed with additional zest into deeper sin—into more degrading vice. He has never made any use of his soul.

CHAPTER IV.

"She loves with a love that cannot tire,
And if—ah woe! she loves alone,
Through passionate duty love flames higher
As grass grows taller round a stone."
COVENTEY PATMORE.

Rose's Journal.

AND so here I am by the sea; sometimes on it, ever by it, never out of the hearing of it. I see it angry, and it is so powerful to express anger. It roars, and all the waves rise like rebels; half-frightened, shouldering each other, they disappear, but rise again more rebellious than before. Then, like a great mother, she rebukes them with hollow, sad moans, and there is a hush in the cora caverns of the deep.

Then the wind speaks to the sea, and they whisper to each other what they will do; and the great ocean heaves a deep sigh. and says, "I have been up all night courting the moon, who was shy and timid, veiling herself every now and then with an idle cloud passing by, though I sent all my little wavelets to bed in their cool green chambers, except the few that are on guard round mother earth. I was as still and pellucid as glass, and reflected back her beauty, so that, out of love for herself, I thought to see her, all night long, looking down upon me with her pure eyes. But no; so I am cross and lazy. I think to slumber awhile."

"Slumber!" answers the wind, "you great, untiring, heaving thing, you are always in motion, and have been, ever since God said, 'Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear. And the gathering together of the waters shall be called seas.'

"Ah, my good wind," replies the sea, heaving out his words, "if I pride myself on anything it is that unchanged, unchangeable, have I remained since Godlooked at me and pronounced me 'good.' Pure and obedient to His laws have I ever been; not even the vastness of my size, the power of my might, nor the riches I have stored away in my green chambers, have tempted me to lift up my head and say, I am a god. my bosom I bear fleets of all nations; within it I bury all the drowned, keeping them safe against the judgment day. At God's command I rise; at His wish I am still; so that no man can look at me and deny that there is a Supreme Being."

"Come, I don't want a homily," whistled the wicked wind: "if you are not going to have a game of play with me to-day, I am off to my own den, until you are in a better mood."

"I shall not slumber long, as I have a good deal to do. There is a lot of worthless

rubbish collected on my surface, which I mean to deliver up to gossip earth. And that she may not, in a pet, fling it back, I must send some of my little waves down into the treasure-caverns for a few pearls; for silver shells, and rose-tinted corals; for long shiny ribbons of seaweed; for green tufts of corallines, and bunches of salt sea-flowers, and other things." But the wind has gone, never waiting to hear its playfellow drone out with slow cadence the list of its treasures.

And so it seems to-day as if great ocean slumbered; and the little waves run up hushingly, whispering their secrets to the solid secret-keeping beach.

What are their secrets?

I have one, but I cannot whisper it; if I had speech, I may not tell it.

When love enters into a young girl's heart, she locks it up there close. Then one comes and knocks; if it is he, she opens it a little; it would not be well for him to

enter at once; he would be dazzled with the riches of love treasured up there for him. If it is not he, the heart does not hear the knock; it is midnight in the heart; all is shut up, closely barred and locked; the heart is asleep.

And so our Pamela felt like this, and conquered it.

Oh Fate! oh Hope! oh Mercy! ask me not the like. I am wayward—I am of many moods—I am sad—I am merry, one hour between the other. But this is life—this is breath—this is as unchangeable as ocean, as deep as her caverns, as high as her waves; for heaven is nearer at hand in the very strength of it. I sail on clouds—I walk on thrones. My muteness is past, for I require no words; they have not the power to express the perception of my happiness. But if he does not love me?

Shall I stand at the door of his heart and knock? That would not be maidenly. Can I not wait and enjoy what is now mine? We walk together, and the walk is an ovation. Every hat off, every eye beams; and if he addresses one more fortunate than the other, it is as if they struck sunlight from his words. And I am walking by his side, his chosen companion.

We ride together; we leave the blue sea, with its tawny sands, and go often into green lanes, where the woodbine, emblem of constancy, rises up and thrusts her blossoms into our hands.

We ride gently, musingly at times; his great soul speaks out in hero language; and amid the noble thoughts of his heart, there is a reverence, a piety, so humble, so sincere, that it casts upon the dignity of his manhood a halo of sanctity, making those attributes divine, which in lesser natures are but great.

Had I not wondered at Pamela? It is true. But she loved an image of her own creating. As it crumbled to ashes under the touch of truth and honour, she

herself resolutely buried it with her own hands, too deep ever to rise again; and to purify her heart from the taint of it, set herself a work of mercy to do. The noblest measure to redeem the past.

Little waves, does he love me, think you? Whisper your thoughts to me.

I am mute—dumb, you say.

True, but we are at no loss now to understand each other. He said laughingly, "Little Rose ought to obtain a high place in the matrimonial market for being, like the most perfect wife known, the woman of Brentford, free from loquaciousness. But she had no head, you say. True, she had no head; in that, if she at all resembled Rose, she had a great loss. We should be very sad, mother, not to have the little petted face to look at."

"I will not have my little Rose teased. If you will talk of marriage, let me know when I may be so blest as to have a daughter-in-law."

"Now in that one speech, mother mine, how you wound your poor unoffending son! Has he not been thinking for the last six weeks that he has been almost, if not altogether, a better daughter than ever he was a son?"

"A daughter! Hercules and the distaff over again, I presume you wish me to think;—no, I trace nothing the least feminine about you. With the attractions of ten sons I may perhaps credit you, while I still pine for my daughter-in-law."

"Have you not read, mother, of the various mischances that occur between mothers and daughters-in-law? Of the sad little awkwardnesses that accrue, owing to total differences of opinion, bordering upon matters even more important than apples and onions? See, Rose agrees with me—she would hate your daughter-in-law. The child pouts. What waywardness moves you now, pretty one?"

"Rose likes to be treated with dignity

and respect. She agrees with me that, if I had a daughter-in-law, probably she would keep my restless, roving son at home."

"No, that she could not do. God has not so far prospered what I have done for my country, that I am to remain idle for the rest of my life. I must redeem the pledge. Your daughter-in-law means to be a peeress; she cares not to wed a Knight Commander of the Bath."

"As if you courted worldly honours, my son?"

"I do, mother. The inheritance of noble birth — of a good name—is prized. How much more the name one makes for oneself!"

"You are ambitious, Arthur; of all loves, the most exacting."

"Ambition has a spice of gambling in it that lends it a charm; but it is a fine vice, if you mean to consider it a sin rather than a virtue; it is praiseworthy from the unity of its object, and for the steadiness of its purpose. Shut the door in the face of ambition, and it will come in at the window. I am ambitious. I like being ambitious. My chief ambition at present is to be a good son."

- "Ah, my Arthur, when were you ever the contrary?"
- "Rose, listen to my mother; just now she upbraided me for the indifference with which I treated her wish for a daughter; and at the moment when I am about to comply with her wishes ——"
- "Arthur, my son, be grave for one moment."
- "I told you so, mother. At the bare supposition of an immediate daughter-in-law your lip quivers, your eyes fill with tears. I see you will never agree; I shall give her up."
- "See, the tears are gone; it was for you. If she should not love you—if she did not dote on you—if she was not proud of you—ah, then, I should not, could not agree with her."

"I have no evidence to show that she fulfils all your conditions, for I have not seen her yet, mother. Listen, Rosie, and tell me if you know of mortal woman like to this—

"Gentle, she must be, but firm; religious, yet no saint; sensible, without pretence; graceful, without affectation; modest, and yet no prude. I desire her to have white hands and teeth, soft hair, and small feet. I should prefer her slender in figure, but with a firm step; one who walks the native princess of her own maidenly thoughts, and from whose eyes beams the regal consciousness of a kingdom well-governed. Eyes serene, frank, trusting. Tell me of her, Rose, and she shall have my heart in such safe keeping that I will honour all women for her sake, and deny her nothing but my soul, which is God's, and mine honour, which is my country's."

The Rose of that evening hung her head

as if a storm had pitilessly beaten her down, almost to annihilation.

And that night the wind came howling out of his den, lashed the sea with furious blasts, until it rose, heaving. And from beneath its vast depths came the long surging billows of the tempest—those mighty monsters that carry away ships as the wind scatters dead leaves.

And in the morning the shore was strewn with wreck.

CHAPTER V.

"Those that are up themselves keep others low;
Those that are low themselves keep others hard,
Ne suffer them to rise, or greater grow;
And every one doth strive his fellow down to throw."
THOMSON.

A LETTER from Mr. Rivers to Mr. Home:

"DEAR F-,

"Failed a second time! What would you have me think? Are your promises forgotten? Did I not know that your future interests are even more concerned than mine in making Pamela your wife, I should regard your want of success as tantamount to playing me false altogether. You desire me to assist you;

how can I do so without compromising my position in the lawsuit? I must not be seen even as speaking to you, until Pamela is in your power. Once you have effected that, rely upon my open, avowed assistance.

"You say, each time that fellow Clifford followed you down, and warned Pamela of your vicinity. You must throw him off the scent; start for Dover, and double back. The thing must be done suddenly, by a There are but the two hold stroke. women-servants in the house, and Giles. You have ascertained that she takes long rides by herself, especially to the cottage of Giles's father. No road can be more lonely; across the Wolds the scream of a woman will resemble the cry of a bird—the shrill warning of some frightened animal. It must be your care that she does not scream twice. Why, Ferdy, do you come to your grave, sober Algy for advice regarding the ensnaring of a petticoat? Fie on you for

belying your own spirit. Arouse you, man, and be the herald of your own success to yours,

A. R.

Mr. Home's letter to Mr. Rivers:

"ALGY,

"It is all over; I have failed again. Accident made me acquainted with the fact that John Clifford had gone to Scotland—I hope to buy corn, not for what we know may be learnt there. So I went down to the old place with full confidence, and had scarcely been five minutes within the house when I heard the unmistakable tones of Pamela's voice.

"Rejoiced to find her far from Redheugh, so directly in my power, for you know Foxton will do anything for me, I sent to say that a gentleman wished to speak on most important business with Miss Lovel. You know Pamela's peculiarity is to believe everything said to her, and it is

this blind confidence that I rely on; though the same feeling makes her hold tenaciously to any bitterness aroused by this trust being imposed upon. That unlucky speech of mine about her sister Rose, I don't believe she ever will forget it, or forgive it.

"As I expected, she was not long in obeying my summons, but entered the room, veiled and cloaked, as if about to return home. I had the key of the door in my hand, fully determined to detain her by force if I could obtain no promise from her.

"I flew to meet her in my best manner; using the utmost ardour and vehemence in my expressions of delight. She coldly gave me her hand, and pointing to a chair, said, 'Take your seat, and tell me your wishes.'

"I can assure you, Algy, I surpassed myself in the glow and passion with which I poured out my love and devotion to her. She endeavoured once or twice to restrain me, but I was worked up to an excited pitch, and declared I would hear nothing, listen to no words but those of pardon and peace from her.

- "As I tried to kneel before her, she rose, and withdrawing her veil, said—
- "'Mr. Home, you owe it to yourself that you have been so long addressing the wrong person. You sent for Miss Lovel; she came. You have perhaps forgotten that Pamela's voice and mine are alike.'
- "It was Mabel! more sarcastically cold and austerely bitter than ever.
- "Seeing my confusion (you will allow it was enough to confound a fellow), she said —
- "'Mrs. Clifford and I are on our way to see Pamela. We are waiting here for the carriage from Redheugh.'
 - "' I must see Pamela,' I said, hastily.
- "'Not so,' answered Mabel, 'for an interview will do you no good. Poor Ferdy! our father's dear friend; be warned in time, Ferdy. Remember what age requires to

sooth its weakness, to mitigate its pains. A clear conscience, Ferdy—a good and tender heart—a desire to be worthy of the heaven approaching so near—which may yet be lost at the last moment.'

- "'You were always so hard upon me, Mabel."
- "'But not so hard as you are to yourself, Ferdy? Come, by the memory of my father, throw off the demon that possesses you, and be once more his friend; for though in his grave, you will be so, being ours.'
- "'And Pamela, she will love—she will marry me.'
- "'Never,' said Mabel's voice from Pamela's mouth, for she entered the door, and the sisters met. I declare to you, Algy, that, on my soul, I never saw such love as theirs. They had not seen each other since their departure from Lovel-Leigh. Mrs. Clifford came in, and pulled me away, that they might be left together.

"Do you think that they only of all the world have this power of loving? I very often think of those first days with Pamela, and her devotion to me. I can't think why she changed. They have just gone, looking so happy; they never asked for me, or I think it very hard and left a message. strange; and in fact, my dear fellow, I am desperately low. I wish I could live a few years of my life over again. It is so miserable having nothing to love or care about. Mabel seemed to think that I was getting old too; but a glass of brandy will set that all to rights. I shall await your answer "Yours, here.

"F. H."

Mr. River's answer:

"DEAR F ----

"For God's sake, come up immediately. I must hurry on the trial at once. There is some plot on foot, and the only method I have to balk it, is to bring on the

trial before they have time to digest it.

Mr. Moore is in Scotland now, but returns
to-night, and brings Mabel with him. He
was accompanied from Scotland by a French
woman and a girl! What does that mean?
Before you leave, find out if they are at
Redheugh; in which case I would advise
you to have a look at them.

"Yours,

"A. R."

Mr. Home to Mr. Rivers:

"DEAR ALGY,

"How can you make one so nervous? There is no one at Redheugh but the usual party. Mr. Moore did not come here; Mabel met him at York. I can't write, my hand shakes so; your letter has upset me. To-day, I have just received the inclosed. I was sure my dear Pamela's heart was all my own; and now that Mabel has gone, you see the truth will out. I can't go this evening, I am not

well; but to-morrow—to-morrow, my dear, kind Algy—is 'big with the fate of Cato and of Rome.' In other words, you will shortly see me in town with our prize. I shall not let her go, I assure you; and, upon my soul, she will doubtless think it ill of me if I let the opportunity slip of making her mine for ever, spite of her sisters. Knowing your anxiety for this happy finale, I send this off in all haste.

"Yours,

"F. H."

The inclosure:

"Pamela Lovel desires an interview with Ferdinand Home as speedily as possible."

A letter from Mr. Moore to John Clifford:

"My dear John,

"All our trouble will go for nothing if the Lady Pamela is so scrupulous. But I suppose she must be humoured. In general I am stern,—very stern, and not to be

moved; but I must be obliging for once. I must remember, if I am without feelings, others are not. And now, thank God, the Rivers thought to take us by trial is on. surprise; I know Rivers! I should have been greatly surprised myself, had he been able to surprise me. He has subpænaed all the young ladies; for what reason, is best known to himself, though I am on a pretty straight road when I say it is to annoy. The man has not a shadow of chance. the delay shows that; the tricks he and Home have played, their endeavours to kidnap the Lady Pamela, and the little lovebird Rose, though ostensibly my Lady Xantippe was the party concerned in that; but Rivers put her up to it. With either of her sisters in any sort of danger, my Lady Mabel would have signed away her estate with the composure with which I shall sign this letter.

"What troubles me most, is the effrontery of the man going on with the cause at all.

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He intends to bully, and browbeat, and insult our little ladies in open court-relying upon the effect of scoundrelism on their delicate nerves, and the timidity consequent upon their secluded educations. He knows the twins will hate the ordeal which publishes to the world the infirmity of their little darling. Evil, low thoughts, befitting a villain, do I accord Rivers in this matter: and if I belie him, may God forgive me, provided he is confounded. I am not sure if I would not run the chance of being sent below, that I might have the satisfaction of seeing him there. I don't pride myself upon being better than my neighbours, but I don't permit my feeling to overmaster my judgment; yet so, my good John, I will allow to you, I wish I had the horsewhipping of Rivers. I fancy I could hit,—I incline to think I have some power of arm. an idea, if once Rivers and I came in contact, there would be blows, -blows, John, that would leave a mark behind-a mark

not easily forgotten. And yet, do you know, if I had any feeling I should pity the fellow. Upon my word, I think he loves the Lady Mabel, and his love has reached that point which touches the anteposition. Poor Rivers! actually I find it in my heart to say, poor Rivers!

"Yours,

"Francis Moore."

CHAPTER VI.

"Go, fix some weighty truth;
Chain down some passion; do some generous deed;
Teach ignorance to see, or grief to smile;
Correct thy friend—befriend thy greatest foe;
Or with warm heart, and confidence divine,
Spring up, and lay strong hold on Him who made thee."
Young.

Rose's Journal.

I HAVE read that perfume exudes from wounds incurred for the love of God, which fills the air with a divine and health-giving incense.

But what about the wounds of the soul? How heavy seems the air of the world! how thick the atmosphere that is sunless—overspread with a murksome curtain, through whose damp, dark folds no ray can penetrate!

Shall I live, and feel it so evermore?

No; let me extract a perfume of heaven from a wound in the soul. I will fold my hands calmly and inhale it.

A dream stole into my heart, which drew me on to love with a love for which there is no name. It distilled an elixir into every vein. When they were brimming over, and about to pour forth from their abundance—a stream that the sea of eternity alone could absorb and gather together, I awoke, and discovered my dream was a deception. All but the love. That remained.

Was so much love to be lost, wasted, because it found no channel in which to run, and gladden the earth with its murmuring song of happiness and content? Love is so powerful; what is impossible it counts as done. It must be done. I myself will hew out a new track, though

it be baptized with tears of agony. But my soul seems to have no home, no restingplace, wherein I may take breath, and pause Pity, like twilight, enin my labour. velopes me in a grey shroud; pity for my own sad doom; and she permits me no light, no hope, through her shroud. moon is not to turn my twilight into a silvery, humid refulgence, that, like piety, shines into deepest shade. And yet there is a song in the air, the trees rustle, and the leaves whisper some words. The earth murmurs the same from her deep heart. I can hear the words coming out as the blades of grass wave to and fro, and the flowers utter them to each other. birds catch the song, and carol them high, even up into the blue arch of heaven. And the clouds form themselves into mantles for the angels, whose eyes beam out with a holy lustre, speaking to me, without tongues, the self-same words. All nature breathes with the sound, making a

mighty chorus, with but one voice—
"Come unto me"— "Come unto me, all
ye that labour and are heavy laden"—
"Come unto me." Lord, I come. Teach
me to turn this love into a source of
happiness. Yet, not happiness only, but
something higher. Make my love so powerful that it can do noble and true things.
I mourn and say, if my father still lived
to love me, it would not be so hard. Let
me the rather do as he did—sanctify my
love by the deeds I will make it perform.

Yes, thus it shall be.

We came up yesterday to town. To-day Mrs. Castleford and Sir Arthur brought me to Mabel. I knew what was about to occur; my heart was shivering in anticipation of the ordeal.

She stood there at the gate, my Mabel, whom, for the first time in my life, I trembled to see. She stood there bareheaded, shading the glare of the sun from her expecting eyes with a branch of laurel;

her white dress, gathered round her whiter throat, floated in cloudy masses all round her; her uplifted arm, her eager face, her eyes in which lay hidden a radiant smile, ready to break forth in gladdest happiness—all, all proclaimed the fate accomplished.

As we swung through the gate, Arthur opened wide the carriage door, as if compelled to obey the appeal of that longing face; in a moment she sprang in, and I was clasped in her arms.

When the high and self-curbed soul is moved from its lofty composure by a moment of rapture, how beautiful it is to see the overflowing of its fine nature! Mabel saw nothing but me. With that rapidity with which love had taught us to interpret each other's signs, she had asked and been answered a thousand questions regarding her father's darling, before the carriage drew up at the door. Then, taking me in her love-strengthened arms, she bore me straight into the house; and placing

me on a chair, she knelt before it to satisfy herself that her little Rose was in nothing changed during the long six weeks of absence. As she kissed me, and petted me with an abandonment and gladness that was the more winning and gracious from one usually so calm and self-possessed, she forgot that any other eyes than mine beheld her in this moment of nature. I saw them. He had his hand on his mother's arm, as if to restrain her from His eagle eyes noted interrupting us. everything; and as he did so, a smile sunned them with a soft light, insomuch that his mother, looking at him, looked again, wondering. Mabel, watching my eyes, turned and saw them at the door. Then she arose, and welcomed them in with an instantaneous change from the enraptured sister to Mabel Lovel. from shame, but because the deepest love curbs outward show, and sacredly hoards up its treasures.

And she thanked them both for their kindness to and love for me, her little darling; she thanked them in few words, but they were fittest and best. Her eyes spoke. They were ever so eloquent; and while she addressed her words to Mrs. Castleford, whom she knew, her eyes spoke them to Sir Arthur, whom she now saw for the first time.

So I took her hand, and drawing her towards him, I placed it in his—my mode of introduction. And I looked up into his face as if to ask, what more could he demand of me, than to give each of them that which was most precious to me. And my look seemed to trouble him. Perhaps there was a piteousness in my eyes that made him wonder; but the wonder was only momentary, as he turned his gaze from me to look into the frank, fair face that was now greeting him.

Very few were their words to each other; but he seemed reluctant to lose the clasp of the hand I had placed in his. When noble souls meet each other in their paths through the world, how fine is the sympathy that rises between them! They each read the thoughts of the other, as if each saw into the other's soul. But it is not with seeing, rather by judging, that they know each other at once. "As I think, so dost thou think; for honour, for truth, for God, there is but one pathway." The finer the nature, the truer its instincts.

"Yes, little Rose," he whispered to me, as they left us, "you are right. Gentle, but firm; graceful, without affectation; the pretty teeth, the white hand, the soft hair, the slender figure, and firm step, with more, much more, than my wildest dream had pictured. Look not so woful, Rose! Should she be another's, will that make her the less yours? I trow not. God be with us all!—say Amen, Rose."

And so they went.

I thanked God that night for the greatest of His gifts—the power to endure the sublimity of self-abnegation. And yet, was it endurance to give up what I most prized to Mabel? No; looking back now, I recall the feelings of that evening, and am happy in the recollection.

Mabel had been to see Pamela.

"And I am so proud of her," said she. "Silently she has been doing so great a deed, that we must pay her the homage of being the worthiest daughter of our father. It is her secret, not mine, and in good time little Rose shall know it. At present, nothing stands in the way of a great good to us all, but poor unhappy Ferdy, whom we are to forgive seventy Twice has Pamela sent to times seven. him to come and see her for his own good, but some unhappy fate pursues him, and each time he has failed to obey. We hear that he was in no state to present himself before her, which is the more sad, because the trial has come on; and as it advances, so does his last chance fade away.

"I saw Miss Woodville; she must have been a lovely young woman; but what is better, she has a fine character. It shone out lustrously, when one of lesser soul would have carped and doubted. But she did not like my voice resembling Pamela's; she could not tell which spoke to her.

"And the tenderness and goodness of our sister to her; the brightening up of the poor blind face as she hears the light step approaching, and feels the gentle touch that guides her everywhere, are the more. beautiful because she knows it not herself. She is cold and severe in her speech; but it matters not what she says, Pamela answers the harsh word with a little soft laugh of incredulity and happiness, that tinkles like music to Miss Woodville's ear, if you may judge by her face. But Pamela you will see soon. She is summoned to appear in court by Mr. Rivers; so am I. For what purpose but to trouble us by a publicity we would avoid, we know not. But,

Rosie, you are tired. There is a weary look in your eyes. You have been doing too much. Wayward as ever. Little one, on this the first day of meeting, can you quarrel with your Mabel? Miss Arlington and Otto went out for a long walk that nothing might come between thee and me for the first few hours. And I thought, Rose, to hear so much from you. Will you not tell me if he, our hero, is as great a hero in the home circle as in the battlefield? More, much more. That is high praise. We must have forgiven him, had he so bent his great heart upon great deeds that the little trifles of home were neglected. And yet, to be a hero at all, one must excel in all things. The pictures are not just to his eyes, Rose. They are so penetrating, and withal so soft. Did he think to see a likeness between us, Rose, that he regarded me so much?" And a bloom, like the sunny side of a peach, coloured Mabel's brow and face.

CHAPTER VII.

"He is my bane, I cannot bare him;
One heaven and earth can never hold us both;
Still shall we hate, and with defiance deadly
Keep rage alive till one be lost for ever."
Rowe.

Pamela's Journal — continued.

"I AM making a three-volume novel of my life, I think," continued Miss Woodville "and none so pleasant, is it? Nothing but disappointments, troubles, and cares. But I now entered on the happiest period of my life. I was a practical woman, as I said before, and what I undertook to do, I did to the extreme of my power. But I will dispose of the dramatis personæ about me. First I placed that boy Rivers with the

I have ever had to repent of the deed. He was clever, he was ambitious, he rose, he made his fortune; I hear him well spoken of everywhere; and above all (let me say it in his praise) he has been a firm friend to your Ferdy (thank God he is not mine) all his life. And on Christmas day, as regularly as it comes, he sends me a barrel of oysters; creatures I never touch. So much for him.

"Now for Dr. Home. The man's soul, if he had one, was infinitesimally small. I was right in my surmise that he was without the common sagacity to enjoy his money when he had it. His sole idea of wealth presented itself to his mind in the shape of a bottle of brandy always full, and always on the table.

"That he was able to say to a friend, 'Will you have it hot or cold?' every minute of the day, was the limit to which his ambition soared, and from which it never swerved.

The end of it all was, that of course he died from drinking, and that within a few weeks of my return home.

"Aurelia and her boy came to live with me. Weak and foolish in many things, I gave her credit for being refined and lady-like; but she had lived too long with Dr. Home. I soon discovered why she looked old and faded before her time; and in the agony of shame that she sometimes caused me, I was justified in regarding her illness and death from smallpox as a blessing to herself and a boon to me.

"I caught the disease from her, for I nursed her, not permitting others to do what I declined undergoing myself.

" It was then that I first felt pain in my eyes.

"Well, now I have disposed of them all, and I have got my boy (ha! ugh! my boy, indeed!) to myself. I would not let him go to school; he would become like the rest of his horrid sex. But he had the

H

first masters and tutors at home. He was very lovable; it is hard to think the young can be so deceitful. I think he loved me then; I was his darling Auntie every minute: I doted on him. For him I worked early and late. Out in the mornings seeing after the labourers; riding in the wet over all the farms; regardless of meals, of time, of sex, of beauty (I had not much left after the smallpox), I considered nothing, and thought of nothing, but my boy, and the fortune that I should store up for him. Of his mother's there was barely 12,000l. left; but that was carefully placed out at interest, and not a penny touched. became a character in the neighbourhood, and was respected by some, and hated by The 'some' were the great and rich, who applauded the spirit and energy with which I farmed, planted, drained, and cultivated my land; would come and note the effect, ask to copy my plans; wonder that a woman had the wit to hang her gates, so that they swung as easily as their

own park entrances; who currycombed her pigs, and had them washed; while they could walk through their domiciles without staining the thinnest shoe. They admired the resolution with which she out-talked her bailiff; the practical knowledge that made the carpenter think she had been apprenticed to his own trade; and the smith that she must have shoed a horse; or the gardener that she was as good a barometer as any he could buy.

"All this delighted me. The other sex owed me such long scores of unhappiness, I was glad enough to take payment for the debt in making them own my superiority.

"With regard to the 'others,' my neighbours, they called me arbitrary and selfish. I was no more selfish than they were, and had as much right to my own way as they had to theirs. The indulgence of our peculiar sins caused each to expand; so I and my neighbours enlarged the borders of our private prerogatives to so great a degree,

that we got beyond the limits of shaking hands.

"The boy grew. Outwardly the fondest mother would have been justified in any extravagance of love for the possession of so beautiful, so charming a youth. As years went on, the promise of his boyhood heralded a perfect manhood; there seemed nothing lacking that the most anxious heart could desire. He was gentlemanly, polished, not clever certainly,—that was my one disappointment; the last thing he cared to look into was a book;—particular to fastidiousness regarding his dress, his horses, the servants that attended to him. I saw in all this nothing but the promise of some great, high fate.

"Deeply as our family had fallen in the past years, it should rise with him to the summit of so much earthly happiness as God permits us down here. I was not a religious woman; the love of order and the decencies of society led me scrupulously to

church, with as much regularity as the greatest saint. But when I returned from thence, I probably scoffed at the parson; considered an irksome duty done, and the rest of the day my own to enjoy. In fact, my religious duties were performed because custom demanded their observance. I felt utterly callous about the effect on myself.

"The boy knew this to the full as well as I did. He went to church for his private motive; namely, to be seen and admired; perhaps asked to go and dine at one of the great houses. They made much of him; and as for me, I denied him nothing.

"I cultivated the society of all the great in our neighbourhood; and considered that he had almost gained a heaven, when he was admitted to run in and out of an earl's house with the freedom and welcome of one of its own sons.

"Oh Ferdy, if I erred, how bitterly have I been punished! How sorely hast thou burdened me with the painful pressure of

an ever-pricking conscience! And yet, from the beginning of your life, you were a liar. I was not answerable for that. The bluntest assertion is usually the truest. Falsehood expressed, implied, diluted, gilded over, was ever on his lips; yet such were his fascinations, his power over me, I attributed the failing to the exuberant fancies of his youth. I forgot the crust of earth, which becomes harder and less pliable in the ripening age of manhood.

"I am a woman, and you a girl. It becomes me not to relate how, from a proud, a haughty, a happy woman, I grew ashamed to quit my own door—to face my own servants—to see my own tenants. I will but say that door after door was shut against him, my idol; lowly ones with as much scorn as the highest.

"I made arrangements to send him abroad, though no mother ever parted from her most petted darling with greater pangs. Pending these arrangements, against my

wishes, he entered into a friendship with that man Wraxal (but I had my revenge; he never received a farthing of me from that hour, even though the wretch bearded me in my own house, struck me, tried to frighten me; he might have done his worst; he had forfeited the privilege of receiving the annuity of 100l., and I was not going to break my word through fear, and of him too; he never had another shilling; and he died, as he ought to have done, in a Well, he made a compact with ditch). that man, and went yachting; and was by him introduced to some other people, who took, as all did, a fancy to him. A woman was there—a Jezebel. Well, we will say no more; I don't love my own sex much, but I never expose them. Ferdinand was thrown out of a port-hole one night, from that yacht, like a dog; no doubt he deserved it; your father picked him up, saved him. Then, once more was accorded me a time of peace and hope.

"There was a refinement, a purity, a goodness in the household of Lovel-Leigh, that found its way even into Ferdy's volatile heart. He returned to me subdued, repenting, full of thought, of good resolves. He saw your mother; he avowed his love for her in the short, strong words of truth. He had a vision, or visions, of another purpose in this life than merely to please and be pleased; and in giving voice to these impressions, he divulged the perception, that, for the first time in his life, there was a doubt concerning his love being returned. He who had never sued in vain, who, young as he was, walked a conqueror in the dominions of love! Could it be that mortal woman lived, who refused his plighted love? It was so. I knew not whether to moan for him or be glad, so certain was I that a keen, bitter disappointment was requisite to refine his character — to make him feel.

"Nevertheless, privately, I made a journey

Mr. Seaton. In that stern—that wonderful man, I beheld a character that redeemed the odious race in my eyes. He commanded and had my highest reverence and esteem, though he refused me his grand-daughter to be my child.

"I essayed every argument; I proffered every bait; I tried blandishments, flatteries, prayers, entreaties. Deaf to all, I broke out into scoffs and sneers, and openly taunted him with a design upon the heir of Lovel-Leigh.

"I cannot forget his answer.

"With a smile, lofty in contempt, but pitiful too, as if, like a god — an oracle — a priest of Delphi, he was under a divine absoluteness to speak the truth, whether for life, for death; he said —

"'Madam, that my grand-daughter will be the wife of Mr. Lovel, I feel assured; but had it not been so decreed, I would have placed her in her coffin with grateful hands,

rather than see her the wife of one who will love nothing he does not destroy, and will prove the greatest enemy to his dearest friend.'

- "Answer me, Pamela. Has not Ferdinand Home proved the truth of your great-grandfather's prediction?
 - "'He has.'
 - "And yet you still care for him?
 - "'I mourn for his soul.'
- "His soul! I never thought he had one. I hoped he was born without. I was kind to him after this; and he was good—for him. Five or six years passed away, when again it was expedient to send him from me. I sent him to Tours, to a French family, with whom formerly I had exchanged those vows of friendship that seem so lasting, but which die away without the daily stimulus of neighbourhood. Theirs survived the blight of time, and was kept alive by a yearly interchange of presents. They were indebted to me, early

in our friendship, for a benefit—slight, indeed, but not the less a benefit in their eyes. I had lent them money, as strangers, trusting alone in their honour for repayment. Though this was delayed to a period almost suspicious, I had not reminded them of the debt; I was as reliant upon their word as if an hour had but elapsed since I poured the money into their hands.

"They regarded me as a being superior to the rest of the world; and in their gratitude never forgot me, or permitted me to forget them. They demanded, as a right, the privilege to serve me, but I prided myself in being in a position to live free of all obligation to the world, until, in an evil hour, I committed Ferdinand to their care.

"There, look in that desk,—read some letters, written in neat foreign hand, on foreign paper,—every sentence a blessing,—every word a benediction that I gave them 'at last the happiness ineffable to return their so great debt.'

"They had a child,—a girl, so beloved, that they spoke of her, in solemn terms, as God's gift. One day, I sat here, in this chair; I was recording certain sums paid into the bank; I counted up my wealth on my fingers, and smiled to think how rich my Ferdy would be, if all years prospered like this year.

"I heard a carriage; I placed my bank books, my papers, all, safely in their proper place, and was about to lock them up, when there rushed into my presence a frantic man and woman. They were my French friends; they came seeking here for their child, their God's gift! They had paid their debt of gratitude to me, but oh! at such a price,—such a fearful score the other way, and the balance goes on increasing year by year. Pamela, he, your Ferdy, had stolen their God's gift; she was gone; she was that which we do not name,—and so idolised! hitherto an object worthy to be idolised—tender—gracious

-good. On that night came the first film over my eyes. How is it, Pamela, that some hearts are so sensitive of wrong and disgrace, at which others barely turn away their heads to smile? I felt stunned with the weight of shame. But I set out with these outraged, these furious parents in search of their loved one,-loved the more because she would need love, now, so much. For, in true hearts, the darker fate lowers, the more they strive to lighten it with love. In my indignation and despair, I mocked God by making myself Ilis avenger. made a solemn vow never to see Ferdy's face again until she was found,—never to utter one word to him until I heard him say, 'Elise is my wife.'

"The Almighty God registered the vow.

"We sought her everywhere, in all countries. Strange to say, we always inquired for two—he and she; and after nine months' fruitless wanderings (wherein we got to hate each other, my French friends

and I, because I always reminded them of him they abhorred; and I, because they were so timid and weak in their sorrow, without energy or hope), we suddenly heard he was at Lovel-Leigh. Travelling with the utmost speed that those days permitted, we found ourselves in ten days' time at Rudchester.

"There the worn-out parents took to their beds. I ordered a carriage, and went straight to Lovel-Leigh. Your father and mother were on the terrace, watching two little girls; I saw them from the window of the room into which I was ushered.

"One child had a young bird in her hand, which she pressed tenderly to her rosy cheek; the other stood like a little sylph on the terrace, holding another bird on her open palm, and calling in clear childish tones for the parent birds to come and take it. The expression of their faces alike, yet unalike; both lofty for their age,—the one in tenderness, and the other in command—

struck me at the time. They might be five years old. But I forgot them, as the mother turned her face to the window at which I stood, the servant having warned them of my presence. Pamela, if you in anything resemble your mother, God has given you a divine gift of beauty.

- "'I have my mother's eyes, but nothing more.'
- "That is enough; two ages are necessary to produce her like.
 - "'I have a little sister—'
- "Pooh! she is dumb. I have heard of her. But to go on, Ferdy was not there; he had left them more than a week, but was soon to return. Where he then was they could not tell. So I left them; and I quitted their presence with this sad conviction—'If people like these, God-like in thought, in expression, in beauty, fail to imbue Ferdy with some portion of their fine natures, he is lost. Goodness clothed in such rare adornment of person (outward)

show only having charms for him), never existed in such perfection before. And the love visible, each for the other; in all they did and said, they seem to have but one soul between them. If God leaves me but a single sense, I shall thank Him with it for the privilege of having seen these two. In my blind state, I recall that scene often, and always with pleasure; and when I do so, I fancy my soul is not so blind as my eyes. I love goodness spite of all.

"Well, we again started to seek Ferdy. I employed Rivers to find him out. Then we heard a tale,—she was dead,—this their God's gift had been recalled from the earth, wherein she fluttered so brief a space; and Ferdy was away hiding his uncontrollable grief and agony in some other hemisphere than ours.

"River's styled her, 'wife,'—Ferdy's wife; he was gone off to mourn alone the death of wife and child, both taken in one hour. "The parents were satisfied; the certificate of marriage was given them, signed by a Roman Catholic priest. It was not for me to tell them such marriage was illegal. They returned to Tours, erected a splendid monument to her name, and are happy there, praying for her soul.

"As for me, in my heart, I felt Rivers lied. I taxed him with it, when they were gone, and he quailed. I was so inwardly convinced the girl still lived, that, in deference to my vow, I declined to see Ferdy on his return. And mark, Pamela, when, at last, he forced himself into my presence, I was blind. The light of my eyes had been burnt out with the hot grief that is uncooled by the shedding of tears. So she lives. I know it. I told him so. And one day the truth came out. She had left him. - left him in horror and anguish discovering her marriage was illegal. said he could not discover a trace of her. You may believe that if you please,—I

don't. I did not tell them at Tours, because her own nature will lead her back to them in time; but meanwhile, do not wonder if I sit here in torment, crying aloud, like Goethe, 'More light, oh Lord! to discover and shelter her.'

"The light has come, Madam. Take heart, I have found her."

CHAPTER VIII.

"'For coldest heart that ever beat,
Was never schooled to such deceit
As this,' said I, 'I know.'" BURBRIDGE.

Rose's Journal.

MABEL is with Mrs. Castleford, to be in readiness when summoned to appear in court.

Mr. Moore wished us, Otto and Miss Arlington too, to take up our abode in London, that we might all be together, and rejoice at our triumph, as he said. But Otto loves his birds and pets, and I care not to go where I may see a form and hear a voice that, as yet, I have not trained myself to see and hear as becomes the little

mute Rose. Mute! how good it is to be so! In the sharp anguish of tearing away a root in the heart, some cry, some word, might have enlightened Mabel. Now she sees (all too quickly) that the wayward thing bemoans and sorrows; but whether it is from that querulousness, her failing, or fear as to the issue of the trial, which may keep her longer from her father's grave, Mabel knows not.

All she does at present is to love and pet the little thing more and more, regarding her lightest wish as strongest law; so Otto, Miss Arlington, and I are living here, as solitary as Crusoes — near as we are to the great seat of justice, wherein is being tried our future fate.

Mr. and Mrs. Clifford are in town; so are Mr. and Mrs. Forbes. How pleasant it was to see them! Haughton, too, he came here to visit me this morning. It was with difficulty Nurse could refrain from accompanying him; but the care of the house,

the fear of any one forcing an entrance, withheld her; and all the more, because there was no doubt, in a very short time, bells would be ringing, bonfires blazing, cannon firing, and she embracing us with all her heart, on our happy, triumphant return.

I cannot help contrasting the coldness, the selfishness, and indignation, with which Mabel's conduct was viewed on leaving our home, with the excitement, the eagerness, the love poured forth for her now. Nearly every tenant is in town, and many neighbours of whom we knew little -even Lady Deane has written an epistle, maternal in its expression, "requesting Mabel to permit her to be the chaperon into court, that she may, by all the attention she can pay her, expiate some of the gratitude she owed to our father." And it was with no upbraiding, without even the shadow of an angry feeling, that Mabel kindly answered her by saying she had already been offered,

and had accepted, the kind services of Mrs. Castleford.

Perhaps I shall see Pamela within a week. In the beating of my heart at this thought, I see now how I loved her.

Three o'clock.

John Clifford has just been here.

Mr. Rivers opened his own case. John was obliged to confess that his manner was prepossessing, his words conciliatory, his statements without exaggeration or rancour. He so far negatived one of the rocks on which Mr. Moore intended to wreck him, by confessing he was Mr. Ferdinand Home's brother, in a manner that, though not recognised by law, yet might in some measure account to the jury for the unlimited accommodation and trust he had reposed in him.

"Thus," said John, gloomily, "he made use of that fact to enhance his cause, which we intended should injure it; and though

Mr Moore is as sanguine as ever, we must neglect nothing, and be prepared to refute lies, insinuations, and assertions, that will be poured upon us thick as sand on the sea-'Tis true, if Lady Pamela would permit us,—and yet, as Mr. Moore sensibly argues, Mr. Rivers may turn round and say, 'What have Mr. Home's love affairs to do with my claim on the estate of Lovel-Leigh? In fact, my least little Lady, I am so excited, and was so troublesome, Mr. Moore sent me down here to tell you how the trial was going on, and to say he would come himself this evening, after the court had risen, and you were to have some green tea ready for him. But I am sure you will not wonder at my state, when you hear that my father is even worse. I must tell you this good of my father. He asked me to take him to see my Lady Mabel-which I Sir Arthur was present (oh! what a fine fellow is he!) and Mrs. Castleford. My dear lady sprang forward to meet him, and

took his great hands in hers. I am sure she was thinking of Lovel-Leigh and her father; for, though her face was all in a glow, she could not speak. Then my father, and I bless God for every one of them, burst into a child's flood of tears, and kneeling down, begged her to forgive him if he had ever offended her.

"And she knelt down by him, and said:
'Oh, my father, my father, did he not love his dear old Clifford? and so do I;
you cannot offend me, for his sake.'

"Then my father kissed her hand. When I told my mother this, she said, 'His whole lifetime was too little to give for such a favour.' And when he was a little recovered, Sir Arthur drew him aside, and then my father opened his heart to him, and told him such tales of the Lovel family—of their goodness, their fine honour, their charity, and such like, that I was on thorns, knowing how great a man Sir Arthur was. I feared my father, in the

unwonted excitement, was taking up his valuable time. But not a bit. I heard him encouraging my father more and more, asking questions, particularly about my Lady Mabel (the two ladies had left the room); and so he remained talking for nearly two hours.

"On getting him at last to come away would you believe it, my little Lady?-I was so delighted at all he had done and said, that I cried out, as the door shut us out into the street, 'Thank, God, father, that you do justice to the ladies.' sooner were the words out of my mouth, than he lifted up his stick and hit me a great blow, saying it was no business of mine 'whom he liked and whom he did not.' I forgave him the blow, as a dutiful son, and took care to remember no more than he chose I should do. As long as he thinks rightly, I care nothing for what he may do to me; for his conduct has been so great a sorrow to my mother as

well as myself. It has made me more happy than I can say, that the mere sight of my Lady Mabel should have opened his eyes and heart. He will be morose and savage with me, doubtless, being unfortunately a witness to what he now considers a fit of weakness; but what of that? He has a tender corner in his heart, and if he never speaks to me again, I will remember this scene, and be comforted. To-morrow, my mother and I go down to bring my Lady Pamela to town. There is no doubt but that she will be summoned. Rivers and Mr. Home are firmly persuaded she still loves the latter, and would marry him if she had but a fair excuse. They delude themselves with the idea that her character is so tender and yielding, they will have no trouble in drawing her into a confession of this sort.

"Little as I like to think of my gentlest lady being tormented in open court, by rude and unscrupulous lawyers, I yet think with pleasure how the weak may confound the strong. There is no might like the might of gentleness. But I tire my little lady. Come, my Lord Arlington, let me visit all your pets. Perhaps I may make myself of some use with you, for I am to wait here, to return with Mr. Moore."

In good truth, I was tired all day long. I rose in the morning more fatigued than when I went to bed. Miss Arlington was like a good angel to me. Perhaps she divined my need of sympathy; and none knew better than she the charm that could best soothe a heart crushed, vet living, and to live. Her care was vigilant, but the sad luxury of solitude she gave me in copious fulness. Like a ship thrown on its beam ends by the sudden burst of a tornado, it must be suffered to right itself by its own buoyancy. Failing that, it sinks, and is seen no more. I was trying to right myself, and she interfered no further than, like a steady sailor at the

helm, to hold fast by the rudder, ready for the first gleam of hope.

In the evening, quite late, Mr. Moore arrived in a more excited state than John Clifford.

"What a world! oh, what a world we live in! I couldn't live in it if I had feelings. To think of that Rivers-beginning so mildly, going on so plausibly, winding up so viciously. But the Judge had him there. Ha! that was good! that pleased me! I felt so elated, I almost embraced the man next to me; only, fortunately, I am so cold-hearted, I can generally curb the little feeling I have. Rivers—that Rivers absolutely insinuated he had been accepted as a son-in-law by Mr. Lovel; but as he permitted a little of the malice of his nature to peep forth, when adverting to Miss Lovel's refusal to ratify her father's last wishes, the Judge interrupted him, and said, 'Surely you have come to the wrong Court, Mr. Rivers: am I to understand this is a case of breach of promise of marriage?' Sarcastically he said it. Rivers shivered; I saw him; he felt the ground giving way beneath him; his case tottering—lost. With admirable presence of mind—I allow that; yes, I allow him that praise—he bowed low to the Judge, still lower to the jury, by which he gave himself time to collect his thoughts, and then, as is usual with him, turned his mistake into a plea for justification.

"'I trust,' he said, 'nothing has been said by me that in the smallest tittle can militate against the name of a young lady whom to honour is my dearest pleasure—whom to love is my fate, hopeless or not. None of the enlightened gentlemen whom I now address but have experienced those sentiments of exalted devotion that are inherent in the breast of every man of honour for one woman. They will therefore the better understand the feeling with which I sacredly shield a beloved name

from the shadow of reproach, while I adopt a more common and worldly form to restore me to that position from which female caprice hurled me as from a throne. I fearlessly lay myself open to the charge of avarice: I tax my name, hitherto blameless, with the odium of covetousness. I refrain from publishing the all-powerful commands of a father, who, though dead, cannot be forgotten by such a daughter. I might detail the effects of a certain plan of education, which, debarring them from intercourse with the world, gave to the young ladies of Lovel-Leigh an idiosyncrasy so peculiar, that they resembled, more than all other beings I can name, the little petted, imperious princesses of a Sultan's dynasty and blood—as ignorant, and a thousandfold more innocent.

"'I bury sacredly in my own breast the means I used to combat the caprice that so fatally mars my own peace, and I move in this matter only so far as is necessary for the ultimate advantage of Miss Lovel. Unconscious—fatally .so—of the wrong she does herself and her sisters. I am compelled, for all their sakes, to bring this action. It is not their money I require; it is not to obtain a love which is valueless unless freely given; but it is essential they should be guarded from the effects of their own inexperience of the world, and brought to see that the means devised by their father for their welfare and happiness (when God removed him from their sight) are the fittest and most proper for them to fulfil. Gifted by God and Nature with every charm that any woman was ever known to possess (and I appeal to you, gentlemen, to ask of each heart what power-what effectual, what irresistible ascendancy - these charms have over us), the little ladies of Lovel-Leigh require nothing but a knowledge of the world to rise superior to the many, equal to the But I have said more than I infew.

tended. I may be pardoned when it is known—when I have proved—when the issue of this trial shall demonstrate, that I am actuated solely by the desire to fulfil their father's dying commands. My half-brother was his dearest, his only friend; and, at Mr. Lovel's request, I became his legal and confidential adviser.'

"And so he went on," continued Mr. Moore, who had talked himself into fever-heat. "He might have thrown dust into the eyes of the jury, but I am much mistaken if he deceived any other person in Court. But go on, my good Rivers; go on; indulge in sentiment; be pathetic; moralise; weep. You shall not do it for nothing. My name is not Moore if I don't give you occasion to weep and bewail yourself. Another cup of tea, Rose-bud, strong as brandy. I shall be up all night. I have to answer Rivers: in fact, I can't sleep until I have answered Rivers, even if he is a week examining his witnesses. It

is of no use your thinking the contrary, John Clifford. I have feelings; I find I have a good stock of feelings, as any honest man would, to hear a glozing, plausible, mealy-mouthed rascal as he is talk of the little ladies as imperious young princesses of a harem!-of their ignorance! their caprice! hang him-of their defiance of their father's wishes-of his stepping into their father's place! damn him! Oh, I have done, I have done. I shall say no more. When I ever do feel so much as to say that objectionable word, why, then't is all over. I am cool now; extremely cool. Another cup, my dear. Rivers, you shall be like this cup, my fine fellow - dashed all to atoms, as I dash this cup."

And the cup went into the fire.

"Oh!" said John, groaning, "you think ill of the case, Mr. Moore, or you would not be so put out."

"Put out! I am not put out; I never vol. III. K

was put out. John, you are a fool. Let me tell you, John, it is a very sad spectacle to see a man gifted with talents good, serviceable, excellent talents, with which he could assist his fellow-men and gain usury for his Lord—perverting them; doing worse than laying them by, useless, in a napkin; using them for the basest of purposes -for ensnaring, for defaming, for criminating three of God's creatures, of which there are not three like them to Another cup, Rose. be found. calm now. I will be careful of it. I think of the Almighty and His ways, His means, His mercies, His justice believe me, my dear, I become calm, as I ought to do. Rivers is to be pitied. pity Rivers; I do, on my word. When a man resorts to such ranting and raving as he did to-day, with so much maudlin sentiment, and false morality, and infernal lies, I pity him; and so will you. Good night, good night. No, no more, Miss Arlington;

I never take more than one cup—(he had had four). Good night, my little, precious, darling girl; good night, Otto. We fight Rivers some day, you and I, Otto. Come along, John; what on earth are you about, keeping me waiting?"

"I am already in the carriage, sir," responded John.

CHAPTER IX.

"Thy numbers, Jealousy, to nought were fixed—
Sad proof of thy distressful state;
Of differing themes the veering song was mixed—
And now it courted Love—now, raving, called on
Hate." COLLINS.

I WILL collect from the newspapers those parts of our cause that are the most interesting, and that belong in some manner to our history.

The first witness under examination for Mr. Rivers was Ferdy.

Known to most of the London world, if not much respected, he was generally liked. As an acquaintance he was always an agreeable addition to a party, he never ceased talking; and though in such distant ages as the times of Solomon, fools were known by their profusion of words, still in more modern days they are acknowledged to be an essential ingredient to a party. To his acquaintances, Ferdy was an amusing, agreeable fellow. It was only to his friends that he fulfilled our great-grandfather's prediction, and devastated the homes that most trusted and loved him.

It would be difficult to analyze the feelings with which Ferdy prepared himself to enact an important part before the eyes of the world.

His vanity urged him, even more than his half-brother's injunctions, to abstain from any indulgence that would tend to make him nervous. After his return from the neighbourbood of Redheugh, he devoted himself entirely to the task of preparing for the ordeal, and lived as abstemiously as his previous habits would permit.

Therefore when he appeared in the witness box, pale and a little subdued, but

faultlessly dressed (to prepare for which had been his principal amusement while he was in training, as he called it), his general appearance excited great interest. To those who knew him before, he was more like the handsome Ferdy Home of fifteen years ago, than they had seen him for some period. And to others who now saw him for the first time, he appeared one whose remarkable comeliness and gentlemanly appearance might command the sympathy of any woman, the more so when his melancholy and pallor were described as the consequences of a disappointment in love, of a singular and romantic nature.

Added to this was the intense desire to make an impression. He cared less for the issue of the cause than for the notoriety he might gain in the eyes of the world by the manner in which he comported himself on the occasion.

Pleased with his late self-denial, gratified by the improvement in his appearance, conscious of the effect of his dress, and delighting in the public position in which he was about to be placed, Mr. Rivers congratulated himself upon the impression made by this his first witness. He knew Ferdy to be an adept in those arts which express a great deal more than words, and he saw him enter the witness box with a confidence and hope he had not been able to feel before.

From the Newspaper.

After taking the oaths, Mr. Ferdinand Home deposed as follows:—

Was Ferdinand David Home, only legitimate son of the late David Home, M.D. city York? Always understood Algernon Rivers to be his father's son, though, from the unfortunate circumstances of his birth, it was at his (witness's) mother's request kept secret. On this condition she adopted and treated him as her son, and was as kind to him as if he was so. Consequently, they had always been as brothers—never had a misunder-

standing in their lives. Witness's mother died, when he was nine years old, of small pox, his father having departed this life three years before of consumption, which is hereditary (witness appeared to be suffering much from cough, and looked pale and agitated when he said this), and he, unhappy orphan, was left to the care of a maiden aunt.

She was as kind to him as one of a stern and unbending nature could be. She provided him with all the necessaries and most of the luxuries of life, and if she did not accord him, what in his forlorn and orphan state he most pined for, affection, it was because her nature had nothing tender in it. He paid her the duty and gave her the love of a son, for his disposition was eminently affectionate, and he could not live without sympathy of some kind. Just at the age when he felt this yearning becoming insupportable from the want of some object who would reciprocate

it, he met with a frightful accident. He fell overboard from a yacht, and though perhaps he might have escaped the misery of his present life by the not uncommon death of drowning, yet at that period he felt so grateful to a gentleman, Mr. Lovel, of Lovel-Leigh, for saving his life at the risk of his own, he thought himself too happy to devote the life saved to his service. Henceforward, as long as Mr. Lovel existed, they were everything to each other. To say that their love was as the love of brothers, is saying nothing. In Mr. Lovel witness found the friend who filled up the vacant space in his heart, full to overflowing. They became knitted together by a bond of union so strong that, even from her earliest infancy, witness singled out one of Mr. Lovel's daughters for his wife, and waited as patiently for her as Jacob did for Rebekah, so that the ties of connexionship might be added to the bond of friendship sworn between them.

Mr. Lovel, always a shy man, lived a retired life; and after the death of Mrs. Lovel, shut himself up entirely from the world, admitting no one into Lovel-Leigh but witness, who, devoting the greatest part of the year to this friend so beloved, was yet recalled as often as not upon every slight occasion to advise with, or assist, or amuse, as the case might be.

Very early in her childhood had witness divulged to Mr. Lovel the desire to make the second Miss Lovel his wife at a fitting age. And it was always a source of the deepest joy and gratitude, to the heart of a most anxious and loving father, that, in the event of his death, the dearest friend he possessed, the man he most trusted, the being he loved next best to his children, would become by marriage their natural protector and guardian. He was conscious they required a guardian. He had educated them solely to amuse himself; forgetting, until the near approach of death opened his eyes,

that the qualities most charming in a secluded, refined home circle were least fitted to battle with the world. Witness had letters to show from Mr. Lovel, that bore upon this matter in much better and more fitting terms than he was able to use; for Mr. Lovel was a scholar and philosopher of the highest order, spending the greater part of his time in literary pursuits. ness begged indulgence if, on coming to a certain period of his life, his feelings should overcome him. The time arrived when the little object of his affections ceased to be the charming affectionate child, and became the tender, the thoughtful woman. Now he was to be rewarded for his long patience -now was he to call the dearest friend of his life by the dearer, more sacred name of father-now was that fond father, failing fast in health, to see his adored children blest with a protector the next best to himself. Gentlemen, my lord, excuse me, the cup of happiness just touched my lips, only

to be dashed to the ground. Before my marriage could take place, it was necessary to define the position of the three young ladies as their father's heiresses.

Acting upon my advice, as his letters will intimate, he proposed to divide his property into three equal parts, one for each child. As a mark of his boundless friendship towards me, I was named as residuary legatee. In touching now upon a most painful subject, I do so without malice, without the disposition to impute blame to any one. mother left me 28,000l., and during my long minority this sum had nearly doubled itself, as I was led to believe. On coming of age, I lived as became the possessor of a fine unincumbered property. Gentlemen, my lord, I never received a shilling more Out of consideration for a than 18,000l. person who acted a mother's part by me as well as her nature permitted, in deference to her being my only and nearest relative, I made no inquiries, I instituted no legal

proceedings, I hushed the matter up, and only to my father's son was the secret known. But you will not be surprised to hear that I became embarrassed; I was deeply in debt before I discovered the fatal fact. I must have fled the country, dishonoured, blighted, forgotten, but for the liberality, the munificence, of my father's son, who was a thousand times more a brother to me than half of those who have a legitimate right to the name.

When my intended marriage was declared, Mr. Rivers desired me, as a man of honour, to explain my unfortunate position to my dearest friend, Mr. Lovel. It was with difficulty that I had refrained from doing so before. But who is there among this crowded assembly that would have dared, with sacrilegious hand, to tear aside the curtain that veiled the sins of his own kin? I could not, gentlemen, I could not expose her under whose roof my mother had bid me live as a son; I could not do it. (Here

witness paused, and there was some applause in court, quickly stifled by command of the Judge.)

A glass of water being desired by witness, it was brought into court, and after he had partaken of some of it, he proceeded:

I followed the advice of Mr. Rivers, and told my intended father-in-law the truth. With that generosity and love which he never failed to express towards me, he bid me bring Mr. Rivers to Lovel-Leigh, that together they might arrange what was best These letters will show what to be done. Mr. Lovel desired to do, and the extent to which he loved and trusted me. going on well, everything was arranged. In a week, in two days, I was to be married, my debts paid, my mind free, my heart overflowing with ineffable happiness, when Mr. Lovel died, died with no further preparation for us, for himself, than one short half hour. I could not be selfish, in that hour of agony, to such affectionate daughters.

I bore my misery and despair patiently. Mr. Lovel's will, made by Mr. Rivers, had not been signed. Another one, an old one, I believe alone existed, making Miss Lovel sole heiress, leaving her sisters but their mother's portion, and some few thousand pounds. With a liberality and tenderness that but faintly describe the devoted affection of my intended bride, she gave me, within three months of her father's death, the whole of the fortune she inherited. shall never forget her words, "Take it, my Ferdy," she said, "my father promised your debts should be paid, and his promises are sacred to me." I took the money, my lord, for two reasons: in the first place, I was pledged to pay my creditors by a certain time, that time having been fixed by Mr. Lovel himself, and only permitted to pass by from the evil circumstance of his death; and the second reason why I accepted my bride's gift in the same spirit with which she offered it, arose from the knowledge that

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Miss Lovel, the heiress, intended to make her sister co-heiress with herself. There is a third Miss Lovel, but, afflicted from birth with an infirmity, it was useless to embarrass her with the care of money or property. You will understand that I took this money as part of that which was rightly to be mine, for, out of the abundance of the love and faith he had in me, Mr. Lovel had given me a bill signed, but not filled up. With this I was to settle every claim upon me. This bill, my lord, is still a blank, and long ago would have been destroyed, but for the unexpected, the extraordinary proceedings of Miss Lovel. Though she was aware that the seven thousand pounds given me by her sister was totally inadequate to carry out her father's generous intentions, she refuses to fulfil her promise of dividing the estate with my intended bride. Sheacknowledges without disguise, that she desires to prevent our marriage. She is totally regardless of her father's dying commands, his last wishes - in

short, she is so imperiously determined and self-willed, that I am compelled to appeal to the laws of my country, to obtain, not only the hand of my promised wife, but the necessary sum of money to enable us to live. Both Mr. Rivers and myself have essayed every conciliating argument in private, without effect. The loss of money, the pledged freedom from debts and embarrassments, I could have foregone, but my promised wife never. I have not loved her from childhood to relinquish her unresisting. With my life only will I yield my hope.

Cross-examined by the Judge.

"The plaintiff, as your principal creditor, brings this action against the defendant on the plea of the bill, signed but not filled in by the late Mr. Lovel, for the payment of your debts?"

"He does, my lord; these three letters written by Mr. Lovel himself, show fully his intention."

(The three letters now read aloud in VOL. III.

court, are the three already given in the earlier part of this history.)

- "Was Mr. Lovel aware of the amount of your debts?"
- "No, my lord, not to the full extent that I now claim from Miss Lovel, for had she fulfilled her father's wishes in accepting Mr. Rivers as her husband, he had promised me, according to the generosity with which he proved himself my brother, never to claim the larges ums for which I am indebted to him."
- "In short, you made a compact with him to share the estate of Lovel-Leigh between you?"
- "We should have done so certainly, but we made no further compact than what Mr. Lovel desired as the most pleasing and excellent arrangement for his inexperienced daughters. We should have been a united family, unequalled for happiness and content, and he was grateful, thankful, that the husbands of his daughters should be

men so perfectly united in heart and thought."

"Has the defendant given any reason to you for the present line of conduct?"

"None, my lord, that I should like publicly to state. I may have my suspicions, but, as a man of honour, I will not divulge them."

"Especially as suspicions are useless in a court of justice."

It was with a sense of relief, likest to a nerve drawn up to its utmost tension of agony, and suddenly loosened, that Mr. Rivers saw Ferdy released from the witness box.

As Mr. Moore, commenting upon his evidence, said, "Poor Rivers! Rivers stood on a mine; the least failure on the part of Home would have blown it up, and neither he nor Home would have escaped annihilation. But I give Rivers credit, not only for drawing up a deposition most masterly, but for making Home learn it, and repeat it by rote. It was well done.

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Those letters of Mr. Lovel's are ugly things, but nevertheless their cause is an ugly cause. Witness how the Judge fastened upon its weak point at once, Coalition, a division of the estate. Rivers must have felt ice running down his back. Rivers must have thought himself sitting on red-hot cinders. And so Clifford comes next. Well, we must prepare for Clifford blundering. A man who turns each eye different ways, to grasp all he can, will necessarily make a boggle of it. The boggle may be in our favour more than theirs. Rivers will know that. won't suffer him to be long under examination. Clifford intends at present to swear right and left for Miss Lovel. But, mark me, he will eat his own words a dozen times without knowing it. We must expect him to be a prodigious ass, an outrageous fool. I only wish my turn had come to crossexamine him. He would not know himself."

CHAPTER X.

"Oh! my best sir, take heed,
Take heed of lies! Truth, tho' it trouble some minds,
Some wicked minds, that are both dark and dangerous,
Preserves 'itself;' comes off, pure, innocent!
And like the sun, tho' never so eclipsed,
Must break in glory." BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

Examination of Anthony Clifford, agent to the late Mr. Lovel.

After taking the oaths, answering to his name and explaining his position in the Lovel family, deposed as follows:—

"Mr. Lovel had no London lawyer to manage his affairs, he was a clever man, and a very good lawyer himself; the estate would show that there was not an estate for forty miles round in such order as Lovel-Leigh, or such contented, respectable tenants. It always had been so, the family living at their seat all the year round. Mr. Lovel had but one friend, Mr. Home. He must have loved him dearly, he denied him nothing. Money without end, yes; at last his daughter (Mr. Rivers, interrupting witness as he began to specify the moneys Mr. Home had received at different times, put the question, "Not even his daughter?" to which witness answered as above).

"We were to have had a wedding; it was delayed until the young ladies were of age, at Mr. Lovel's request. I believe, also, he wished to make his will, leaving his estate between his three children equally. I advised the eldest daughter to take the place of son, but Mr. Lovel was so fond of Mr. Home, he would have given him anything he asked, and thought he would be in a better position to advise, and take his place in the family, if he had part share in the

estate, by right of his wife. The young lady was much attached to Mr. Home; had been so always. Did not think the other ladies cared much for him, but Miss Pamela doted on him. Did not think much of Mr. Home himself, was no man of business, was careless about money. Generous enough, rather too much so, when he had nothing of his own to be generous with: was always coming to Lovel-Leigh; was sent for very often by Mr. Lovel. Could not account for Mr. Lovel liking him so much. Had no great respect for himself."

Cross-examined by the Judge.

- "Was the will signed making the young ladies co-heiresses?"
- "Yes, sir, my lord, I have it now. It was of no use, Mr. Lovel made a later one, in which Miss Lovel is sole heiress."
- "Did Mr. Lovel assign any reason to you for the change?"
- "No, my lord, I considered he thought better of my advice. Miss Lovel is an ex-

traordinary young lady, very clever, as knowledgeable in business as a man."

"He was displeased with Mr. Home?"

"I think so, my lord, though he did not say so. He summoned us—Haughton the butler and me, being then weaker than I had ever seen him, and he bid us sign after him, saying 'This is my last will and testament, for untoward fate bids me trust my children to no one but themselves. This will makes Miss Lovel sole heiress of Lovel-Leigh, so you will be pleased, Clifford.'"

Mr. Clifford's examination was over.

Mr. and Mrs. Forbes were both summoned, one after the other. It appeared that Mr. Rivers had furnished them each with a deposition, simply but artfully worded, by which each bore testimony, Mrs. Forbes in stronger terms than her husband, to the great love and friendship subsisting between Mr. Lovel and Mr. Home for a long period of years, and which, according to their statement, lasted to the day of his (Mr. Lovel's) death.

Mrs. Forbes was also subjected to a little cross-examination from Mr. Rivers, which elicited the scene of her remonstrance with Mabel, as she called her, upon her cruelty and injustice towards Mr. Home and her sister. She gave it as her opinion that Mr. Lovel made a new will, at the last moment, through the persuasion of his eldest daughter, who desired nothing so much as to break off her sister's match with Mr. She had heard it said, Mabel was jealous of Pamela, but for her part she saw nothing of it, and indeed would not like to say if she had; for she was not one of those women who exposed other women's faults; she always took care to gloss over their little peculiarities in the hearing of the men.

Lady Deane's testimony was even stronger, as if Mabel's refusal to accept her offer of chaperonship had aroused a further feeling of anger against her, and that, unable to act the conspicuous part she desired on

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the one side, she made up for it by increased vindictiveness in favour of the other.

Our Mabel was described by her as arbitrary, haughty, supercilious, obstinate, and jealous; who made use of her vast power over an invalid father to govern him and everything about her; whose word was a law to her sisters, both weak-minded, both wholly subservient to her; who, fearing the consequences of this lawsuit, had arbitrarily dismissed her servants, shut up her house, sent one sister, always delicate, . to be maid to an old blind woman in Yorkshire, and the other, who was afflicted with the loss of one of her five senses, to be apprenticed to a milliner, Mrs. Watson, Park Street, Grosvenor Square; and all this contrary to the advice of witness, her As Lady Deane pronearest relation. ceeded with her evidence she seemed to increase the vehemence of her assertions. Mr. Rivers began to see that she was injuring his cause — rather than supporting it. A few questions from the Judge probed her real feelings too deeply to be disguised.

- "As their nearest female relative, you did not advise the young ladies to compromise?" asked the Judge.
- "Miss Lovel would hear no reason; she had decided her sister should not marry Mr. Home, and she was to be obeyed at all hazards."
- "Did Miss Lovel suppose that the sum given by her sister was sufficient to pay Mr. Home's debts?"
- "It is supposed that she did so; but her father was of a very different opinion, he trusted Mr. Home so much, that he gave him a bill, leaving the sum blank, that it might be filled up according to the sum he required."
 - "He still holds that bill?"
- "No, Mr. Rivers has it, in lieu of large sums of money advanced to Mr. Home by him."

"What prevented the marriage taking place before Mr. Lovel's death?"

"Miss Lovel so decidedly set her face against it, that they did not dare to go against her wishes."

Mr. Rivers at this point succeeded in getting Lady Deane out of the witness box, and then declared that though he had summoned the Misses Lovel to appear in court, and answer certain questions he had to put to them, yet in consideration of their shy, retired manners, their inexperience and reluctance, he should spare them the ordeal, and partly close his case. Nevertheless, did he see it needful for the rights of justice to demand their testimony, he trusted he might do so with the more confidence that nothing but necessity compelled the order.

Mr. Moore now rose, and if any of our friends had fears lest the excitement he had been in the last few days, after each evening of the trial, might now be at such fever pitch that his usual good judgment would be at fault they were much mistaken. Wholly unlike the irascible, fidgety, restless little man that had run in and out of all our different domiciles at all hours of the day, Mr. Moore appeared to have grown into a tall, dignified, impassive lawyer.

With singular simplicity of language he gave a short history of the events of the last few years, without animosity, animadversion, or rancour. He explained the real motives of Mr. Rivers in bringing this action against his client, and in the very pithiness of his relation struck out the naked truth, as steel strikes light from a flint.

One by one, he examined and pulled to pieces the different arguments and assertions of the different witnesses. Calmly, and with the vigour of common sense and honesty, he related the history of the last few months of Mr. Lovel's life, and the change that these few months effected in his sentiments regarding his long loved

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friend, Mr. Home, and his newly-made acquaintance, Mr. Rivers.

"I state these facts to you, gentlemen, just as they happened. I did not know Mr. Lovel,—I never saw him; but all the circumstances are so dovetailed one into the other, each so completely follows the other, and answers for what had been before, that the smallest capacity is capable of filling up the blanks, and imagining at once the position in which my client, Miss Lovel, found herself on the death of her father. The young ladies acting by mutual consent - each tenacious for the honour of their father—placed the only sum of money at their disposal in the hands of Mr. Home, at the same time, at the very moment, telling him that they declined the honour of his alliance. The bill held by the plaintiff, signed with Mr. Lovel's name, effectually barred the estate of Lovel-Leigh from all power of borrowing or mortgaging,-for who would lend or advance, with such a

liability pending over the property? The younger child was a minor, and was immediately made a ward in Chancery by her sisters, that no risk might attend the portion of one already sentenced by a higher court of justice than this to a lesser fortune than any one among the multitude before In my judgment of the case, the young ladies of Lovel-Leigh have only to be charged with one mistake, and that is giving Mr. Home any money at all. this we must forgive them, on the score of their dutiful affection for their father: a sentiment which is stronger in some dispositions than others, and which appears largely developed in their case.

"The plaintiff, Mr. Rivers, has felicitated himself upon his moderation in not summoning the young ladies into court, that he might have the opportunity of making them condemn themselves out of their own mouths. I felicitate myself upon something still more extraordinary. I re-

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quest the attendance of all his witnesses, in the order they were summoned by him, and trust to prove the justice of the cause of the defendant from the mouths of the witnesses of the plaintiff—an unprecedented circumstance, I should say, in the annals of the law. I summon Mr. Home."

CHAPTER XI.

"Yet how unlike
Their nature and their loveliness! in one
A soul of lofty clearness—
In one a golden aspect like the dawn,
And so wrought,
Her sigh seemed happier than her sister's smile."
P. J. Bailer.

In cross-examining Mr. Home, Mr. Moore was enabled to make him contradict himself four or five times, and otherwise render him so confused that he was as glad to leave the witness-box as he had been to enter it. An adept as he was in the arts of dissimulation, Ferdy had not the wit to avoid the dangerous rocks of facts that will rise upon the shifting sands of deceit. Mr. Moore, anxious to simplify and clear

the case, contented himself with one or two glaring inconsistencies, and then let him go. Mr. Clifford's ordeal was short, but most decisive; every question told visibly in our favour. The same with Mr. Forbes.

As for Mrs. Forbes, Mr. Moore evidently rated her evidence, on either side, of no great count; but with Lady Deane he had precisely the victim he required, and he made ample use of her. With admirable suavity, and a courtesy that was imperturbable, he drew out every point in her character; and was only satiated in this his long-meditated vengeance as she left the witness-box in a passion of tears.

"And now, my Lord, and Gentlemen of the jury, I have the satisfaction of informing you that, having availed myself of the plaintiff's witnesses—an unusual thing, I allow—I have only occasion to call upon one, on my side. And I only call him to fill up the link of my evidence, and to show, where I cannot, the precise reason of the late Mr.

Lovel's change of lawyer, will, and consent to his daughter's marriage. I summon John Clifford."

His evidence was short, and consisted of a statement of my father's fears, and consequent orders to him, at the time of the coming of age of my sisters. On a question asked by the Judge relative to the late Mr. Lovel's wishes regarding his eldest daughter marrying Mr. Rivers, witness answered, emphatically, "that it was an act of presumption on the part of Mr. Rivers, aspiring to the hand of Miss Lovel, her father could not forgive; and it was to prevent the possibility of his return to Lovel-Leigh, on Mr. Home's affairs, that caused Mr. Lovel to give the unfortunate bill which had been the means of so much vexation and trouble to the young ladies of Lovel-Leigh."

On John Clifford leaving the witness-box, Mr. Rivers rose and said, "Reluctant as he was to do so, he must summon Miss Lovel into court."

"It is unusual the defendant appearing in the witness-box, Mr. Rivers," said the Judge, "she may refuse to speak, as she is not called upon to criminate herself."

"I do not wish her to criminate herself; but I know thus much of her, that she will do me justice, at all risks to herself."

"I must own to being curious to see a young lady who has been described in this Court as the embodification of pride, vanity, and presumption, but who seems to have an equal proportion of the counteracting virtues of affection, judgment, and generosity. You will caution her, Mr. Moore, not to damage her own cause."

"She will say what she thinks right, my Lord, and all the more determinately if I was to hint of danger. But she is here."

Silently, as if a spirit had glided in, Mabel, accompanied by Mrs. Castleford, stood at the door of the witness-box. As it opened and let her in, the multitude saw before them a fair stately girl, looking out upon them with calm blue eyes, that reflected around thoughts of the heaven from which they took their colour. As the soft girlish voice with its slight lisp was heard, musically sweet, all over the court, a sob was audible, with a slight murmuring, or whispers of feeling, echoing round.

Mabel coloured, and her eyes looked wistfully through the crowd. As she caught the recognition of many of her tenants, and saw the well-known form of Mrs. Clifford (who had sobbed), together with familiar faces that each Sunday had worshipped with her in the same church at home, she may be pardoned if the blush of modesty deepened into one of pleasure, and a smile sparkled in her eyes, and trembled about her mouth, as she gently acknowledged the presence of these, her vassals.

This little by-play between the tenants and their young landlady had prevented her noticing the effect of her appearance upon the rest of the spectators; but it was such that the signs of a visible astonishment might be seen in Judge, jury, lawyers, and people. A tall Amazonian, blackbrowed, imperious Juno was probably the object they expected to see in the witnessbox, as personating the Miss Lovel whose character had been so freely discussed before them for the last three days; but instead, the fair girl before them bore all the outward marks of the gentlest blood and most womanly refinement, with a frankness and modesty in her countenance that charmed all who looked at her.

"Miss Lovel," said the Judge, "it is an unusual thing the plaintiff summoning the defendant into the witness-box. You are at perfect liberty to decline answering any question."

"I thank you, my Lord."

(Mrs. Clifford said to us afterwards that the people smiled with pleasure as they heard her voice, it was so clear and sweet.)

Mr. Rivers, who had fallen back on his seat, as if overpowered, now rose and began in a low, trembling voice to address her.

"Miss Lovel, I have to beseech your pardon for the presumption, the assurance, that has made me summon you into the witness-box. Before I proceed with the few questions that it is absolutely necessary for my good name I should put to you, will you deign to restore me in some degree to composure by granting that pardon?"

"No, Sir."

"No! Madam, you are hard upon me. You surely acquit me of any other motive than an instinctive desire to prove myself worthy of being heard in this august Court, of an ardent desire to prove to you the purity of my motives?"

The stately, half-courteous, half-disdainful

look with which Mabel regarded Mr. Rivers, as he thus spoke, embarrassed him. He felt, he knew, she would look thus as long as he spoke thus. He paused, and then abruptly asked her—

- "Will you be kind enough to state at whose request I was summoned to Lovel-Leigh?"
 - "My father's."
 - "For what purpose?"
 - "To make his will."
- "And for what purpose was this bill given?"
 - "To pay Mr. Home's debts."
 - "And these letters, who wrote them?"
 - "My dear father," and her lip quivered.
- "Mr. Rivers, I must call you to order. You have proved all this before, and the present examination appears to be need-less."
- "I bow, my Lord, to your decision. I have nothing further, Madam, to ask of you. Not because I am imperfect in the task I

have before me, but because you have hardened your heart against me, and I can better endure my own discomfiture than your anger."

Mabel bowed in acquiescence, and was about to vacate her place, when Mr. Rivers added slowly, "I must request the attendance of Miss Rose Lovel."

If he designed to move Mabel to some show of feeling, he did so. She turned suddenly, and flushing high, looked meaningly at Mr. Moore.

He rose, and said-

"My Lord, the young lady is dumb; her evidence will be useless."

"She writes, and that is better evidence than speech. She was her father's favourite daughter. Miss Lovel, be good enough to answer me this question. Your youngest sister, was she not always and wholly with your father, and knew his secret thoughts and wishes much more than yourself?"

"You speak correctly."

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- "My Lord," interrupted Mr. Moore, "she is not in town, she is down in the country."
- "I sent for her this morning," said Mr. Rivers, drily; "she is here."
- "Miss Lovel," asked the Judge, "if it is against your wish that your sister should appear, say so."
- "My chief desire, my Lord, is to give Mr. Rivers, every opportunity of prosecuting his claim. Much as they may dislike it, my sisters will not shrink from any duty that calls upon them to vindicate their father's memory."

Mabel had scarcely spoken these words, when, carried in Sir Arthur Castleford's arms, I appeared. We had been almost mobbed at the door, so eager were the people to see him, when he was recognised. So he had lifted me out of the crowd. The murmurs of the multitude heralded our approach, and when it was seen who entered the court, the whole bench rose up,

and even the Judge was moved to forget how imperturbably he ought to sit, and bowed a welcome to the hero as vehemently as any one there. So true it is that heroworship is of all others the most sublime, the most infectious, the most high-wrought and enthusiastic of all the passions that sway the minds of men.

Sir Arthur placed me by Mabel, and then, taking off his hat, responded to the universal salutation of the Court, his bright face all over smiles, though he coloured at the warmth of his greeting.

A message came from the Judge to request him to come up and occupy a seat on his right hand; but looking round, as if to beseech silence for a moment, he answered aloud, so that all heard him,—

"No, thank you, my Lord; I am here on business. I am about to act interpreter to my little adopted sister."

I was then lifted into the witness-box, and he stood by me, holding my hand; and for a few moments there was a deep hush in the hall.

I think Mr. Rivers must have felt an inward sinking at heart.

There is no doubt that, knowing the utter worthlessness of his case, he made use of it only to revenge himself, after this paltry fashion, upon us. If he lost his cause, at least he dragged us forth before the public gaze, a notoriety he knew to be most galling. Nothing but the yearning solicitude to put an end at once and for ever to his claims—to the dragging forth of our father's name, to our banishment from his grave and our home—made it less than intolerable to us, this iniquitous, ungenerous persecution.

His cause, in the eyes of the court, had lost rather than gained by the despicable device of summoning Mabel; and I could read, in the countless eyes that gazed at me, so much of a feeling antagonistic to Mr. Rivers, that I knew, I felt, shortly I

should be by my father's grave. We should be at Lovel-Leigh, our home once more and for ever. And something like life and hope entered my heart.

Mr. Rivers asked me if I was not my father's favourite child?

Every head was bent forward as if to listen. In each face I seemed to read, "Can she really be dumb?"

But, as they looked, Arthur had read my answer from my fingers.

- "She was no more her father's favourite child, than that he petted her, being speechless."
- "But you were always with him; he spoke all his thoughts aloud to you."
- "God was so good as to make her like her mother, so that her father was comforted when he saw her."
 - "He confided his thoughts to you?"
 - "Yes."
- "His anxiety that your sister Pamela should marry Mr. Home?"

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"The fear of it killed him."

And a murmur of sympathy ran through the Court, even before Arthur had spoken the words that had been signed to him with so much vehemence of anger. And tears ran from many eyes as he stooped and soothed me with whispered words.

- "You were present at all the interviews between your father and myself. You can testify to his courtesy, his pleasure in my society, his increased regard for me?"
- "No need to interpret that, Sir Arthur, her gesture is sufficient."
- "Nay, Miss Rose Lovel, do me justice, at least. I did everything that lay in the power of man to identify myself with the family. I surrendered my heart, my whole being, into the charmed circle of Lovel-Leigh, and can you say that I was unwelcome there?"
- "No, Rose," half whispered Arthur; "that is pettish. Answer like your father's daughter." But his eyes had a smile in

them, as if he was amused at the answer I had given. And he smiled still more as he said aloud the amended reply.

- "Her father had an honourable pride in being courteous to all people, whether they were gentlemen or not."
- "But one more question, for I see the young lady is greatly prejudiced against me. For what cause does your sister Mabel hinder the marriage of Mr. Home with your sister Pamela?"
- "There is no cause for a hindrance that never existed."
- "Do you mean to say, Miss Pamela Lovel broke through her engagement with Mr. Home of her own will?"
- "Yes; as her intimacy grew stronger from their engagement, and his remaining for longer periods at Lovel-Leigh than he had ever done before, she became conscious that a marriage between them would not be for the happiness of either. She broke her engagement with him at the same time that she gave him all her fortune."

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- "Why did she, designing not to marry him, give up her fortune, her jewels, all she had to him?"
- "Because her father had promised to pay his debts, and she was the only one who had any available money. Pamela loved her father's name above all other things in the world, and only now cared for Mr. Home in so far as her father had saved his life."
- "But why did she go to live with his Aunt, Miss Woodville?"
 - "To fulfil a duty he had left undone."
- "I trust, my Lord, I have elicited sufficient from the poor dear unfortunate child, to demand the presence of Miss Pamela Lovel in court."
- "Before she appears," said the Judge, "I wish to ask a question of your charge, Sir Arthur. Knowing all her father's thoughts so intimately, did she ever hear him say how much money he would pay for Mr. Ferdinand Home?"

- "The largest sum named was fourteen thousand pounds."
- "A sum it behoves us to bear in mind," answered the judge.

Delivering me over to the care of his mother and Mabel, Arthur took his seat by the judge. There was a general buzz of conversation in court, from chance words of which we had little doubt of the sympathy expressed for our cause.

Ten minutes or more elapsed before Pamela appeared, who silently placed herself where we had been, her face covered with a thick veil. We had all three been together for part of each day, after she arrived in town.

CHAPTER XII.

"And he walked home the weariest thing on earth—Pale, sad, and solitary—sick at heart;
For he had parted with his dearest friends,—High aspirations—bright dreams, golden-winged,
Troops of fine fancies, that like lambs did play
Amid the sunshine of his heart."

A. SMITH.

As Pamela's voice made itself heard in taking the oaths not only the judge, but almost every one in court started.

"I must request the young lady to remove her veil," said the judge, "as it seems to me we have already heard her voice before."

Every eye fixed upon her in curiosity; as she unveiled, a deep blush naturally coloured Pamela's face with deepest dyes; and as it faded away, her shy, soft eyes

drooped, overpowered. The spirited, proud Mabel, the pretty pettish, Rose, had each made an impression upon the court. It was reserved for the sensitive Pamela to take all hearts by storm; the grace and gentleness that evinced themselves in every action, the vivid blushes coming and going, the fervour of her words, the exalted sentiments that beamed from her eyes ere they were heard from her lips, all gave the impression that some pure young angel had alighted in this court of justice to remind the world of a higher Court in Heaven.

The commencement of Mr. Rivers's examination consisted of much the same questions he had asked her sisters; the replies he received from Pamela were wholly unlike the brevity of Mabel's and the petulance of Rose's. She answered with all her heart, the poetry of her nature giving a new and beautiful meaning to the questions so often demanded; so that what

Mabel was too proud to imply, and Rose too irritated to think of, came from Pamela's lips like incense bubbling over the casket that held it. The generous purposes of our father, the dismay at the result of fulfilling them, the sensitive anxiety for the happiness of his children, the blow that crushed his feeble frame, "so that his soul passed away, and he left us;" and the simplicity with which she added, "Then, when we could think, we arranged to give Ferdinand Home all that we had in our power to give him, because of our father's promise."

During the time that Mr. Rivers was cross-questioning Pamela so much to his own detriment, Ferdinand Home, hitherto concealed from sight, by slow but elaborate efforts, was gradually drawing to the front, and, at the time when Pamela said these words, was conspicuously laying himself out to attract her attention.

A gathering glow of indignation was

perceptible on every face in court; on none more so than on that of the judge, who seemed only to refrain from an expostulation by the perfect composure and unconcern of the witness, though to no one could Mr. Home's movements have been more patent. And as she ceased speaking, he said in a low, half-subdued voice, "And from my heart, I thanked thee, Pamela."

"Remove that person," said the judge.

Angrily forcing him into a seat behind him, Mr. Rivers besought the patience of the court, assuring the witness of no further unseemly interruption. The witness appeared the least embarrassed among the many present, and to this unexpected, wholly inexplicable circumstance may be traced the confusion and inconsistencies that now marked Mr. Rivers's questions.

Upon a sharp reminder from the judge of the irrelevancy of some, and constant repetition of others, he suddenly said—

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- "Mr. Home was your affianced husband; you loved him?"
- "It was as you say," answered Pamela, colouring.
 - "You love him now?"
 - "No," was the answer, clear but low.
- "Mr. Rivers, I cannot permit questions of so delicate a nature to be put to witness; they do not bear upon your case."
- "Pardon me, my Lord; if I prove coercion in this matter, delicate as it is, I the better manifest to the jury coercion in my case. Nothing but extremity would have driven me to this point."

Then, turning to Pamela, he continued, ill-concealed triumph breaking out in his voice, while his light eyes scintillated out sparks of malicious joy—

"Madam, pardon me for disbelieving that gentle, low-voiced 'No.' Be so good as to read this note, dated not ten days ago. It is in your handwriting."

"Yes, it is."

- "Its purport?"
- "A request to see Mr. Home."
- "And yet you said 'No,' just now, to a most interesting question. I will not ask you to read it aloud, I will do so myself.
- 'Pamela Lovel desires an interview with Ferdinand Home as speedily as possible.— Feb. 13th, 184..'
- "Dated, as I said, just ten days ago. And if that is not sufficient, my Lord and Gentlemen, here is another, dated two days later—
- "'Come, Ferdy, I have good news for you.
 - "'Feb. 15th.

PAMELA LOVEL.

"Just missing Valentine's Day. Curious! Remarkable!"

During this statement of Mr. Rivers, Mr. Moore had risen from his seat, there was an anxious but hopeful flush of joy on his face as he eagerly bent forward, and endeavoured to read Pamela's answer in her countenance.

The mocking manner of Mr. Rivers coloured her cheek, and a slight sparkle of indignation flashed from the gentle eyes that had never flashed an angry thought before. But she said nothing.

"One or two little questions more; unfortunately, silence does not go for consent in a court of justice. Now, Miss Pamela, now, I trust, with such proofs in my hand of your interest in Mr. Home, you will do him the justice, and me the favour, to confess—that you love him."

"No, Sir. I am not capable of loving the husband of another woman."

Mr. Moore's wig went up into the air, but he caught it, stuffed it into his pocket, and sat down, as if suddenly turned to stone, his face alone completely contorted by the endeavours he made to repress his joy.

"Mr. Home was never married, Madam,"

answered Mr. Rivers, a little abashed, his quick mind taking in the probability of Ferdy's having deceived him, and that this his last, his final, his crowning blow on the little ladies of Lovel-Leigh was but the blow of a feather.

"Yes, Sir; he married sixteen years ago. Mr. Moore, will you tell Mr. Rivers the facts?" In a dry, concise manner, Mr. Moore related: "Mr. Home married Mademoiselle Elise Tancreville, of Tours, at first by the rites of the Roman Church—afterwards in Scotland, where they resided for six or seven months, known as man and Miss Woodville, satisfied with the validity of the marriage, invited Mrs. Ferdinand Home to Redheugh. She is there now, with her daughter, and M. and Madame Tancreville. It was to inform Mr. Home of the discovery of his wife that Miss Pamela Lovel wrote those two letters. The trial being so near, she pledged me (employed by Miss Woodville to substantiate the marriage) to secrecy, that Mr. Rivers's cause might not be embarrassed by the disclosure. Why Mr. Home neglected to obey a summons which he has been endeavouring all this morning to assure us was the one thing he most desired, is best known to himself. That it has occurredthe very thing Miss Pamela Lovel, in her high sense of honour, desired should notis caused, as the jury cannot fail to perceive, by a clap-trap on the part of Mr. Riversmost unworthy in a lawyer of his known capabilities and powers of discrimination. We say nothing of the honesty of it. At present, I have only to say on the part of my client, Miss Lovel, she has no desire to avail herself of the unfortunate secrecy with which Mr. Home has treated his marriage. She has but one object in view, namely, the settlement of any claim that Mr. Rivers may prove to possess against the late Mr. Lovel, her father. no desire to depone that the 7,000l. given

to Mr. Home is to be considered as so much paid into court. On the contrary, that was clearly understood to be a gift to Mr. Home, because he intimated Mr. Rivers was not likely to permit him to participate in the spoils he intended to gather together from the blank bill. In their anxious desire that the word of their father should not be called in question, they at once handed over to Mr. Home all they had to give, leaving the bill to itself.

"I do not know if the plaintiff has completed his case, but, as far as my client is concerned, I have no more to say. The desire to be scrupulously just, or rather, exquisitely conscientious, is all that can be laid at the door of the young ladies of Lovel-Leigh."

Mr. Rivers rose as Mr. Moore sat down. It was some moments before he spoke. Then, with something of his former assurance, he said:—

[&]quot;Under the circumstance of so strange,

so wholly unforeseen a statement as the marriage of Mr. Home (the validity of which must of course be tried at the earliest opportunity), I can have little to say. Mr. Moore talks of the high honour and scrupulous integrity of Miss Lovel. I must remark that I could have better agreed with him, had she openly and at once avowed this secret. I might then have spared her, as well as myself, an exposure of private feelings that I would a thousand times rather have buried in my own bosom."

"Pardon the interruption," said Mr. Moore, "Miss Lovel urged me to call upon you, and reveal the discovery, under the seal of secrecy."

Disregarding the interruption with a supercilious and disbelieving air, Mr. Rivers continued:—

"I now trust my cause to an enlightened jury, feeling sure that the means I have taken to divest it of a shadow of greed or venality will be remembered in my favour. It is not here that we find the holiest feelings of the heart disregarded. It is not before the juries of England that nature need hide herself, or feeling be harassed and hunted down. No; as a man—blighted from birth 'tis true, but rising superior to the curse—I come before you, full of the most exalted feelings that God permits to man. I love the good; I adore the beautiful; I worship the noble. I am conscious of none but the purest—the highest motives. I feel that here I am understood. With that inestimable conviction, I close my case."

CHAPTER XIII.

"His own opinion was his law. I' the presence
He would say untruths—and be even double
Both in his words and meaning: he was never,
But where he meant to ruin, pitiful.
His promises were, as he then was, mighty;
But his performance, as he now is, nothing."

SHAKSPEARE.

THE clanging bells of a neighbouring church struck three as Mr. Rivers uttered the last word. We all left the court. Like a silent shadow at midnight, Ferdinand Home had disappeared; the public blow on his vanity and presumption seeming to affect him more deeply than the discovering of a wife. The open acknowledgment of Miss Pamela Lovel's affection for him, with, among his friends, all the long train of

questionings, allusions, pleasant jests, sportive banterings, and such conceits, that his foolish nature delighted in, must now be foregone, and the heavy responsibility of a base deception substituted instead. He knew enough of the world in which he disported himself to be aware that they forgave a barefaced sin, but were intolerant to an acted lie. He had always feared to lose caste by marrying; now he was branded for evermore with the double sin of being married, and not owning it.

Added to these feelings, one other perpetually intruded.

If he had obeyed Pamela's first note, if he had not, in a half-drunken state of vanity and brandy, started off to show Rivers such indubitable proofs of what he (Rivers) had often scornfully doubted to him, what would have been his position now?

He would have been enacting the part of the prodigal son at Redheugh. His aunt would have killed the fatted calf; his wife would have accorded his pardon; M. and Madame de Tancreville would have blessed him. He would have been the centre of all their feelings, the object of all that was said and done. They were his people; he—now so isolated—so often lonely—getting old—feeling desolate—would have been at once blessed with a home, wife, father, mother, and a child, a daughter. Ah, it was in this hour, in this thought, that Ferdinand Home "came to himself." To this vain, unprincipled, selfish heart arose the thought, "My child must not despise me." In the pangs of this his first struggle with conscience, Ferdy shut himself up away from all eyes.

We must finish the trial.

The judge began to sum up immediately after the clock struck three. We were told he was still speaking at five.

What he said may be briefly told.

He opened his speech by saying that the jury, as well as himself, had had an opportunity of hearing a cause that, for singularity in its own features, and for still stranger violations of the mode of conducting it, was without precedent, either in his knowledge, or that of any other judge, since law was established in the land.

The features of the case were romantic, uncommon, and remarkably attractive, from the position, age, and sex of the defendant; while the pleas of the plaintiff were equally notable from the mixture of love, disappointment, revenge, and sophistry, that were all blended together in so strange a jumble, it was difficult to fix upon any one strong point in the plaintiff's case.

It must be borne in mind that the plaintiff, unbroken in spirit by the misfortune of his birth, had early made ambition his mistress. He deserves our admiration from the determination with which he earned for himself, what his parents denied him, a name and a position. He early reaped the reward of his perseverance, by becoming, to the brother born with every

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advantage of birth and wealth, the adviser, helper, patron. It is not unworthy of our consideration to note with praise the love that subsisted between these two, brothers by blood but not by law; founded, as we are given to understand, upon gratitude to the mother of the legitimate son-a rare instance of kindness on the part of that mother—a rarer instance of gratitude on the part of that unfortunate one; it speaks highly for both. In the latter it was no transient feeling-it passed from the mother, when she died, to the son; and we have no reason for disbelieving that the large sums of money given by the plaintiff to Mr. Home are fictitious sums. On the contrary, I am inclined to think that the plaintiff did give those sums. He made them by his own talents; it would seem that, having no ostentatious habits himself, he gladly administered to those of Mr. Home, of whom he was both proud and fond. Very early the idea appears to have been entertained by

them, that Mr. Home was to make a great Then he would reimburse the plaintiff. At all events, he was his aunt, Miss Woodville's heir. I mention these facts, gentlemen, to point out to you that these sums were not gifts. There is evidence that there was always some talk of repayment. The schedule placed before us seems to have been regularly kept, and each entry duly signed by Mr. Home, which we may infer would not have been the case, had there been no idea of repayment. The sum is enormous, amounting, as we cast our eyes over the twenty-four years that elapsed from the first payment to the last, to 47,000l., rather more than 2000l. a year. In addition to this vast sum of money, squandered apparently on nothing, Mr. Clifford proved from his books that during this period the late Mr. Lovel gave Mr. Home various sums of money, amounting in all to 11,000L Among the most remarkable features of this very remarkable case,

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is the extraordinary facility with which Mr. Home appears to have obtained money from his friends, and the celerity and recklessness with which he spent it, and which they must have witnessed.

In saying thus much for the plaintiff, I have unfortunately little more to add. is an instance of a man of talent, common sense, and good judgment, allowing all and each to bow subservient to a moment of weakness. We are doubtless each conscious in our own hearts (if we have been so fortunate as to conceal it from others) of an evil time, of a fatal mistake, of a sudden fall in the brilliant path of success; the effects of which cling to our remembrances with the tenacity of a living shell to its wave-washed home; and which, if known, rises in the minds of men, with a significance as palpable as the endeavours with which we strive to elevate ourselves in the ranks of the world. They remember our fall the more as we rise. It is thus that the world is balanced.

The plaintiff appears to have anticipated a weak point in his plea. He therefore thought to strengthen it by adding another, which was even weaker. At one time he led us to believe he merely wished to carry out the dying wishes of a romantically generous friend. At another, he desires to convince a young lady, against her will, that he is a most fit and proper husband for her. At one time I had to remind him he was in the wrong Court: at another to recall him to the language and feelings of a gentleman. The plaintiff is undergoing one of those painful ordeals of life, a mistake, and it is all the more sad for him that it is so public.

But you will do well to sift from the mass of extraneous matter, with which he has well-nigh smothered his cause, what he in justice might demand.

Mr. Lovel gives him a bill, signed, but otherwise blank. He says in distinct terms it is to pay Mr. Home's debts.

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Now we can judge by the mere fact of common sense, that he no more intended to pay 47,000l., than any one of us did. This sum was nearly the value of his whole He was a tender father, and was estate. even then occupied in leaving his three daughters an interest in his estates, utterly beyond the control of any husband, or any How was this conwill but their own. sistent with promising to pay the debts of a man (no relation to him) amounting to 47,000l. The thing is absurd; we must divest ourselves of this notion absolutely. It appears upon evidence that once Mr. Lovel alluded to 14,000l. as a probable demand from Mr. Rivers; but not as payment for Mr. Home's debts, so much as forfeiture by Mr. Lovel of that sum, for the blameable weakness of intrusting a blank bill to any other hands than his own. 7000l. seems ever and always the sum present in Mr. Lovel's mind, and which you will not fail to remember was about the

sum Mr. Home would have received as a legacy from his friend, Mr. Lovel, if the first will had not been superseded by the second.

From some parts of the plaintiff's evidence, and from the form of much of his cross-examination, we trace the second plea, which I have pointed out to you as weaker than the ostensible one, namely, an idea that he requires compensation from Miss Lovel for her refusal to accept him as a husband. I believe, gentlemen, we must admit that this disappointment is in reality the mainspring of the whole trial; though he was so far wise, with Mr. Lovel's three letters and the blank bill in his possession, the rather to come into this Court than that of my brother judge for breach of promise of marriage.

But I have no doubt that you have felt, as well as myself, that the plaintiff speaks the truth when he repudiates the idea of summoning Miss Lovel into Court out of greed or cupidity. He has brought her before us either to alarm the young lady, delicately nurtured, and wholly secluded from the world and all its actions, into an acceptance of his suit; or from a spirit of revenge, alike revolting to the feelings, and dishonourable to him. But I mention this suspicion only to warn you to regard nothing but the case in point - whether Mr. Lovel designed such a use of his blank bill as the plaintiff would have us suppose, or not. With all the hidden motives and outraged feelings of Mr. Rivers we can have nothing to do. There remains one more subject; namely, the part that Mr. Home bears in this iniquitous trial, for so I must term it. Not one of the least extraordinary facts in it is the position he occupies through the whole. He is almost another plaintiff, both with regard to the bill and the disappointment in marriage. The romantic and unforeseen dénouement of his prior marriage, extorted from Miss

Lovel against her own wishes, and only in defence of her veracity, can have nothing to do with your decision in regard to Mr. Home's debts and the bill, inasmuch as the late Mr. Lovel was entirely ignorant of such marriage. Doubtless his intentions would have been very different had the marriage been announced earlier; but with that we have again nothing to do. I am the more anxious to impress upon your minds that this marriage must in no way influence your judgment regarding the bill, for two reasons. The first, that the plaintiff may have no excuse for supposing that he lost his cause from the unexpected discovery; and the other—and I am even more desirous to establish this—that the young ladies of Lovel-Leigh may not have it said that the justice of their cause was benefited one tittle by the discovery.

And now, gentlemen, I must protest to you that I can make nothing more out of the plaintiff's case. Sift it as I may, but one phase of it comes uppermost. It will be for you to take into consideration whether the plaintiff is entitled to anything; if entitled, whether to seven thousand pounds or fourteen. The case will not admit of more; and if entitled to either, whether the seven thousand pounds already paid by the young ladies, with a promptitude that does them honour, is to be considered as part of one or both sums.

I have still a few words to say, but I make no apology for the trespass on your time, as the subject is one you will as willingly listen to as I shall have pleasure in alluding to it. We owe one debt of gratitude to the plaintiff, and that is for making us acquainted with the little ladies of Lovel-Leigh, as they have been so repeatedly styled by enemies as well as friends, during this trial. In the heiress we may well find an excuse for the bewitchment of the plaintiff's senses. Her spirit and good sense are matched by her

frankness and modesty, and she demands our admiration for the courage with which she has endured so public an ordeal, rather than submit to a mésalliance that would have shamed the ancestors from whom she sprung. In her twin sister we have seen a tenderness of heart united to a loftiness of principle that, together, form a character which we may bless God is sometimes seen on earth to remind us of heaven. And for the "Law's child,"-its pretty ward—I cannot help thinking there are many among us who would spare her their gift of speech only to make the fair little creature perfect. By birth these voung ladies inherit an accumulated dignity from their ancestors. Most worthily is it sustained.

Conspicuous among the strange things that have occurred during this trial is the contrast of evidence. On the plaintiff's side we were smothered with inuendoes, false sentiment, wrong conclusions. and a mass of invective, not always open, but of a furtive and scandalous kind. glaring outrages upon fact committed by the witness Home have brought upon him the odium, to my mind, of being either a knave or a fool. No enviable Happily such men are rare. fame. cross-questioning on the part of plaintiff was to the last degree offensive. the contrast on the other side. We had the frank "yes" and "no"—two words, we are told, the most difficult for a woman to utter. We saw the evident desire to give the plaintiff every chance; in fact, the sole merit his case deserves pointed out by the young ladies. witnessed, all of us, the hesitation, the pang, it gave Miss Pamela Lovel to declare a fact that she feared might be damaging. Mingled with their desire to satisfy the plaintiff in every possible way—though he only summoned them into Court to annoy and frighten them (thank God, the

high spirit of the women of England can rise superior to chicanery and ruffianism)—there was perceptible so pious a reverence for the name of their father—such tenderness in their hearts for his words, his fame—such self-abnegation in all things concerning their own comfort, so that this, his name, might be as clear and untarnished as their own pure souls—that I am constrained, gentlemen, to avow that I almost envy the dead father of such daughters.

If he is permitted to look down from heaven and behold the fruits of his labours and cares, he must feel a glow, even in the heavenly mansions, on witnessing what is doing on earth.

He early saw the value of the spirits given by God to his keeping, and he nourished and tended them through their early years as the planter tends and cares for his fragrant nutmeg-tree, so that, like it, they begin in due time to show buds,

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blossoms, and fruit; and evermore it is the same—budding, blooming, ripening, in all seasons, at all times, never without the fruit of perfection, yielding the richest harvest.

One word in compliment to Mr. Moore, for the gentlemanly, concise, and forbearing manner in which he has conducted the case of the defendant. That his heart and feelings were deeply engaged in it one or two instances during this trial palpably discovered. I cannot but hope that the verdict we are about to hear will be one that will bring forth some other little irrepressible episode on his part; or, at all events, be such as will effectually heal any sensitive wound inflicted by the painful ordeal of appearing in a court of justice, father's to which tenderness for their memory, and their own high courage and resolution, brought the "little ladies of Lovel-Leigh."

CHAPTER XIV.

"Oh! colder than the wind that freezes
Founts, that but now in sunshine play'd,
Is that congealing pang which seizes
The trusting bosom when betrayed.
He felt it—deeply felt, and stood
As if the tale congealed his blood."
MOORE.

WE were sitting waiting in that great dusty old drawing-room into which Mabel and I had been ushered, rather more than a year ago, on first coming to London—Mrs. Castleford, Miss Arlington, Otto, and we three. We were waiting for the verdict. Pamela told us while we waited of the discovery of Ferdy's wife. At that time, when Ferdy came down to Lovel-Leigh to receive Pamela's fortune—even as she gave all she had, broke upon her mind the

first suspicion. With that strange inconsistency which was the only tangible point of Ferdy's character, he had insisted upon giving her a stamped receipt. The absorbing vanity of his nature made him elaborately go through the whole process, as if to cheat himself, or deceive Pamela into the idea that he was both a business and an honest man. It was merely the whimsicality of a moment, for he took possession himself of the receipt, after going through the formal process of making it. During the preparation, he begged Pamela to give him some peculiar paper out of his writing-case. As she sought for it, she pulled out from a pocket some letters, written in French, in delicate hand-writing. The words, "Ta Femme Elise," caught her eye. With that quiet determination, her peculiar characteristic, after Ferdy had completed his receipt, she drew them forth, and asked if they were the letters of a wife, and addressed to him? It was not

in her nature, to expose the sins of another. So we were left to infer Ferdy's confusion or dismay; she told us no more than that he confessed the Roman Catholic marriage, and no other, protesting the lady was dead.

"Then," said Pamela, "I will keep the letters, and read them." After some persussion he suffered her to do so. were dated sixteen years ago, were written from a place in Scotland called Glengarvie, and were the letters of a happy young wife, intermingled with a very high tone of feeling, of piety, and intense affection for her parents, as well as her husband. In passionate words, she every now and then implored him to send for them, or take her In the last letter there was a to them. subdued and melancholy character running through it all, unlike the girlish happiness breaking out spontaneously in the others. At the end of this letter, she asked a question abruptly. "Why have you not had me married by a priest of your church, as well as mine? Answer quickly, and above all, say the day it shall be done."

"It was never done, my dear Pamela," said Ferdy. "She was not a person I could have presented to my friends as my wife. She died in her confinement, poor thing, perfectly happy, to the last moment, in the possession of my affections; I mourned her long."

Pamela, for many reasons, made no answer. The chief one being that within the present year she had seen Ferdy receive a letter directed in the same handwriting; she looked into his face, and seeing no hope there of good to the poor lady, who, though said to have died sixteen years ago, had written so lately, she devoted herself to the task of discovering her.

It was on that evening she asked us to forbear with him, and Mabel had promised forgiveness "seventy times seven."

It was in furtherance of her vow that

Pamela went to Miss Woodville. With foresight, and an admirable perception of the position of all the parties, she knew that the discovery of "Elise" must be preceded by their consent to place her at once in her proper position. The high-spirited writer of the French letters, she conjectured, had not borne the disgrace of a false position for one moment after she knew it. And sixteen years of obloquy and wrong would have increased the first bitter feelings into a scorn and irritation it would be most difficult to allay.

She began her self-imposed task as soon as possible. Necessarily reading all Miss Woodville's letters, arranging her papers, and assorting documents, she became cognizant of the anger of the parents of "Elise," and their despair at the report of her death. Many of these letters were unopened—Miss Woodville saying, "that not only had she no one to read them to her, but she had had no mind to hear the wailings of people

that would not be comforted, and whom she herself had never harmed."

In one fortunate moment, Pamela discovered a letter in the handwriting of "Elise." It was also unopened. But, availing herself of the privilege she had to do so by all Miss Woodville's papers, she hastened to read it.

It was of later date than the one she had remembered Ferdy receiving. short, "imploring Miss Woodville to send news, if she had any, to a Madame Favanti, Holles Street, London, of M. and Madame Tancreville." Overjoyed at this discovery, Pamela wrote to John Clifford, and engaging him to secrecy, bid him go and find out all he could at Madame Favanti's. would appear that nothing John had ever done for his little ladies had pleased him Elise was the head-woman of more. Madame Favanti's millinery and flower department, and had lived there for fifteen years, with her little daughter, whom John

described to be as lovely and engaging a child as he had ever seen, barring his little ladies. He described Elise to be a reserved haughty woman, with no feeling but for her child, and who resented any question about herself. He perceived what Pamela's instinct had defined, that she would flee away into still deeper obscurity, unless met by a cordial recognition of her rights and position. A woman of very deep feeling, not likely ever to forgive Mr. Home for losing her the dignity of her own self-respect — for compromising her at all.

The next step taken by Pamela, advised by John, was to endeavour to establish the validity of the marriage. For this they had to consult Mr. Moore, who himself went down to Scotland, after John Clifford had been there, and collected much more than sufficient evidence to prove the marriage a legal one, according to Scottish law. There now only remained one thing to be done, to beguile Miss Woodville into lend-

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ing herself to this act of justice. She did not need beguiling to be just, but still, from the waywardness of her moods, Pamela had no hope of a favourable issue, until, in a moment of confidence, she began to pour forth her history. And as the detail gradually opened and softened the hard, hopeabandoned heart, Pamela took advantage of the gracious opportunity, as we have seen.

"John and Mr. Moore carried to Mrs. Home Miss Woodville's letter, delivering it in person. It is impossible to describe the vehemence of her emotions, her gratitude to God, to them. I fear Mr. Moore does not like her, she was too demonstrative; John said she was thoroughly foreign. In the midst of all her joy and happiness, she was so proud, so exacting. Miss Woodville must come and take her away herself, in honour and triumph. When they told of her incapability to do so, of her age, her blindness, and that Mrs. Home would find

her father and mother there waiting for her, then she was all pity, remorse, gratitude and delight. Vehement in everything.

"She arrived at Redheugh about a fortnight ago, and I cannot forget the scene between her and her parents.

"It would seem that they have, these French noblesse of the provinces, such an inviolable jealousy of an unsullied name, that death itself is a thousand times preferred to even the charge of levity. Mrs. Home, already wounded to the heart by afflicting her high minded parents with the stigma of her elopement, was little prepared to be blighted altogether by the informality of her marriage.

"The knowledge of it sent her in wildest shame to the deepest and most effectual concealment she could obtain, in this land of strangers; while the parents, after some years of sorrowful sojourn at their once happy home, unable to endure the possible word that might be attached to their supposed dead daughter's name, sold that home, and buried themselves and their griefs in the crowded solitude of a Paris life.

"It was to obtain news of them that Elise wrote to her husband and Miss Woodville. As she acknowledged, her heart every now and then yearned so passionately after them, that she wrote those two letters, irresistibly impelled to do so. They were, by God's grace, the means by which she was restored to them and the world.

"After the first burst of their meeting, when their hearts were still soft and quivering, I besought pardon for Ferdy. His aunt refused to listen, M. and Madame Tancreville accorded pardon at once, Mrs. Home is implacable still. I wrote those two notes to him to bring him to Redheugh. We hoped much from his sudden appearance, the assistance we would give him to plead

for his pardon; but you see, sisters, he did not come. I should have small hope for him now, but for the little Olympia—was it not pretty of Mrs. Home calling her that name? She is now a little younger than our Rose, and so pretty, so sweet, so good. You should have seen the agitation of Miss Woodville's face when she heard there was a child.

"'I am never to be fortunate—'tis a boy of course.' My delight in answering her, 'no,' was so great, sisters.

"And then, after their arrival—when they were in some measure calmed, Miss Woodville's agitation increased. I guessed the cause, and led the gentle little thing to her. She passed her hand over the pretty face, felt the soft silky hair, the long eye-lashes, the little tiny pink ear, and spanned her slender waist.

"'Pamela, Pamela,' she whispered, quite hoarse with agitation—'is it true, is she like?'

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- "'Yes, she resembles—'
- "'The miniature hanging on the left side of the fire-place?'
- "'Yes; you could almost think that picture had been painted for her.'
- "'It is the picture of myself, painted just before my father's death. God is very merciful to a great sinner. God Almighty bless and love you, my darling!' And her voice was so tender, so fond, so full of heart-music.
- "And the dear child knelt down, and put her arms softly round her neck, saying: 'And God bless you, grandmamma, for making my mamma so happy.'
- "'Grandmamma!'echoed Miss Woodville, 'the prettiest name. Never call me by anything else, darling.'
- "So now, sisters, I think I have told you all; and you will forgive your Pamela, that she did not join you in the secret. It was not hers to tell, until brought to a successful issue."

Pamela was still speaking; I, listlessly leaning my head against Mabel's shoulder, was spelling idly a passing thought on my fingers.

"Be not impatient, Rose," whispered Mabel. "I wait only to hear if Lovel-Leigh is mine. If so, you shall be there to-morrow."

Satisfied, I turned and listened; there was a gathering sound in the air, the rattling of wheels, the rush of feet, a hurried commotion in the house, as if there had been a watcher waiting for the signal. The house door was widely opened, the household gathered on the steps; but we waited calmly within that musty drawing-room. Otto alone rushed down into the street.

The kind sympathising faces of Mrs. Castleford and Miss Arlington beamed upon us with confidence and hope.

The wheels approached, the hum of voices rose louder—there seemed to be

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the tramp of a multitude coming up the street.

Then all stopped at our door. We heard Arthur's voice, so clear, so fine.

"No, no; we must not huzza in the streets of London; keep your cheers for the country. Go down home, and prepare to receive your little ladies of Lovel-Leigh with due honour."

But a cheer arose, spite of his words. Then the room filled. Mr. Moore entered first, apparently only occupied in flickering about a large pocket-handkerchief. He had on the most palpable air of assumed indifference that ever was seen through.

"Well! my dear Lady Mabel — poor Rivers, I am sorry for Rivers. Could have told him so from the first—did so—wouldn't take my advice. The jury did not leave the court—verdict unanimous 'For the Defendant.' Hurrah! Excuse me," and the pocket-handherchief, vehemently thrown, alighted on the top of the fire—blesing up in a little bonfire of joy.

CHAPTER XV.

"Because I comprehend
This human love, I shall not be afraid
Of any human death; and yet because
I know this strength of love, I seem to know
Death's strength by that same sign."
E. B. Browning.

EVEN as she received the congratulations of her friends, Mabel had whispered a word to John Clifford, and he, looking at his watch, instantly left the room.

Then we had, as was right, a great feasting. There were present our own party, Mr. and Mrs. Forbes, Mr. and Mrs. Clifford, Dr. Wilson, and one or two of the head tenants. In the noise and confusion, no one but his mother missed John, and she only showed her perception of it by bringing his name more often into her sentences than usual. It was the pleasure of

Mrs. Forbes to beam with delight, and we were elevated in ten minutes to being Miss Lovel, Miss Pamela, and Miss Rose.

In the course of this feasting, we had the trial all over again, and became immensely learned upon what was law, and what was not, and how Rivers dished his cause, and how he never had a cause, or a leg to stand upon. But it was as the judge said, "Private feeling had run away with his better judgment."

'Twas seldom a judge summed up so completely on one side.

"But he could not help himself," exclaimed Mr. Moore, "God bless my soul! Sir Arthur, hard and immovable as I am, I should have done so myself. And the jury, did you see the jury? Upon my most solemn affidavit, I do think if the judge had said much more in favour of Rivers, they'd have knocked him down, I mean they would have risen up. And when his lordship used the word 'iniquitous, this

most iniquitous trial,' I thought they would cheer, I am surprised they did not cheer, only it's illegal. Unfeeling as I am, I felt a sort of irresistible desire to pat his lordship on the back, and say, 'At it again, my Lord; you never said truer words.'

"But oh, my Lady Pamela, what you made me suffer! I was conscious then, for the first time in my life, of the nature of a I can't for the life of me tell how I felt. Cold steel running down my back, and into my stockings; coming up again red hot, and after scorching me all over, suddenly settled on the place where I suppose I have a heart, for something there seemed to swell, and was just about to burst, when you opened your mouth, and spoke like an angel. Not that one ever spoke to me; I am not good enough; but one has suppositions. I wonder how Rivers is? I wonder if he is enjoying his dinner? Mrs. Castleford, ma'am, a glass of champagne to his health; poor fellow, we must

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be generous. The best mutton I ever tasted.

"Well! now, you know, we must have a triumphal entry; I have set my heart on You'll be there, Sir Arthur; you'll see us through it all, won't you? Where's John-where is that John, always out of the way when most wanted? I ask your pardon, Lady Mabel; if he has gone to execute a commission for you, be well assured 'tis done, and all the more pleasure if it is in the middle of the night. Lady Mabel, a glass of champagne—Lady Deane, you know-must drink her health, you and I have had my revenge; I don't bear malice. As for you and her, it will be all right soon; she will be borrowing money of you, and you'll lend it her, and that's the end of Lady Deane. Humph! a favour to beg, do something more for you? Well! whisper it; now's your time if you want to squeeze oil out of a flint, I am in the mood. Divide your estate as your father designed?

Prepare a deed of gift for your sisters? Well, well! don't talk to me now; I believe I have had too much champagne. It must be so, you say? humph! hah! And if I wont do it, another lawyer shall? Well, well! let me think about it. No, not a moment? Imperious princess of a sultan's dynasty and blood, I begin to think Rivers was right; Rivers was certainly not wrong in that judgment. There I consent; but you don't want it to-night?"

- "No," murmured Mabel, low, "but you are all to come down to Lovel-Leigh in a fortnight; then you must bring the deeds ready."
 - "And no public entry?"
 - "Yes, for you."
 - "And you?"
- "Do not think of us. Look at little Rose; see how she fades; I must take her to her father's grave soon."
- "Humph! I see now to where John has been sent."

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"But about Otto?"

"Yes, you must stay behind to take care of him. Bless your heart, my dear, my darling (excuse me), don't make up that heroic face of duty; I only engaged you for a year; that's over, as you know. In reality, Otto would have been in the hands of a tutor six months ago, but for you; so rest assured. Miss Arlington-she really looks quite pretty to-night. (Do you know - here, put your ear close - I loved her when I was a boy. Before I grew hard and stern, I loved her; I believe it is she who has my heart still, and that accounts for my want of feeling.) Miss Arlington knows that he is now to be emancipated from women-kind, and delivered over to the mercies of his own sex. You'll ask her down there to comfort her, poor thing, won't you? She'll be very sad, lonely, her charge gone, nothing to do. If I was not such a brute, I might ask her to come and look after me, hey ! what do

you think? Let me have a word with you in private upon this before I leave."

And in the multitude of overwhelming thoughts that crowded into Mr. Moore's brain, upon this sudden idea, he became as silent as he had before been talkative.

We had scarcely finished dinner, when no less a personage was introduced than the judge.

"If," said the courteous fine old gentleman, "I intrude, you must pardon me. But I could not resist coming to offer my congratulations in a private capacity. If I am deserving of my position of judge, something told me that to-morrow would be too late to pay my compliments."

We had an opportunity of discovering this evening that judges are by no means deficient in curiosity. We underwent a cross-examination that left nothing more for him to know concerning us; but it was of so kindly, so cordial a nature, we could only feel complimented. He did not leave

us until eleven o'clock. Was evidently greatly interested in the number of people that desired to see Mabel, and amused at their different modes of congratulation.

He spoke gravely of Mr. Rivers, characterising his bringing the action at all as an affront against the majesty of the law; but premising that what he began in bravado, he thought he must go on with, at all hazards.

If he had simply confined the action to the bill, and claimed a moderate sum as due to him from Mr. Home, it is probable he might have obtained a verdict. But grasping too much, and mixing his disappointments with what might have been his rights, he verified the old proverb, that "Much wanted more, and lost all."

"In discoursing with the foreman of the jury after the trial, Mr. Moore, I mentioned that I presumed they considered the seven thousand pounds paid by the second Miss Lovel as enough."

- "We do not so consider it. It was a gift to Mr. Home. We argued 'never indebted at all,' my Lord, and gave the verdict under that impression."
- "What say you, Moore was their judgment right, in point of law?"

And so they went at the trial again.

Before he left, the judge, holding Mabel's hand, begged a favour of her.

"That she would permit him to style himself one of her friends, and as such give him an invitation to Lovel-Leigh."

With which request she smilingly complied.

- "I shall wish to come and see after my little ward. I am curious to see the place that has produced a living fairy, for she is nothing else."
 - "In a fortnight, my Lord."
- "Not so; about the Easter vacation; I shall then have a little time. I foresee, Madam (turning to Mrs. Castleford), that we must visit the little ladies of Lovel-

Leigh pretty soon, if we wish to see them as they are, and altogether. Mr. Rivers lost his wits and judgment for one, and I have no doubt we shall find many quite ready to do the same for all three. We cannot hope they will always remain the 'little ladies' for our pleasure."

And he meaningly looked at Sir Arthur, bending over Mabel's chair, full of a manifest pride in tendering her the frank homage of his heart.

Mrs. Castleford, that tender mother, could only reply by a look; but the smile and happiness that filled her eyes with a sudden rush of tears was answer sufficient.

It was true. From the time when I placed Mabel's hand in his, Arthur had begun his wooing. There was no concealment in it. As if in the one glance they had exchanged, each read and understood the soul of the other.

The dream of his youth had embodied a thought in his heart. The dream was now reality. He saw before him her for whom he had been waiting, and he gave her the love he had been so long treasuring up for her.

No indolent self-love stood in the way of this, the angel's virtue.

The grace of command on his brow was new-lighted with a flame of glad heart-service. As his heroic qualities had won him the praise of all men, so now he flung over them the gemmed radiance of Love's fealties. The higher the impulse that quickens the beatings of the heart, the simpler its expression. His love was faith expressed with a mental power that needed no more than a gesture to prove its truth.

Like the sweet breath of summer, the atmosphere was gladdened around him with the overflowings of his own sunny happiness.

The very presence of Mabel seemed to act as an elixir, thrilling each nerve and fibre with irrepressible joy. And this hero—this worshipped idol of a nation's admiration and gratitude—laid his heart at the feet of a young girl, proud to have so pure, so fine an offering to give to one worthy of it. The perfume of his love. enveloped her like divine incense.

Though he had not spoken the words that were to plight their troth (for that, it would seem, he must have an arch no lower than heaven to hear it; with the sanctity of cathedralled trees for the walls, and the moss and the daisies as a carpet for the bended knee that would pay homage for her "Yes,") yet he neglected no opportunity of proving his allegiance. He courted her with the love-letters of flowers; each day she received a fresh one, and he watched her as, with blushes as soft as their own tints, she read the tale he desired, and with answering sympathy, frankly gave him the answer, culled from his own nosegay.

In the midst of us, they invested the commonest events of life with a charm that was reflected on all around them.

Paradise seemed near us, with a new Adam and Eve, whose lofty trust in and love for each other was only second to the confidence with which they looked up to God for His blessing.

Oh! rare love! silent, because the depth of it is bottomless, requiring time only to show the unstinted, exhaustless measure of its flow, how beautiful thou art!

Eager to be worthy of the love, the thread of whose fine tissues each finds in the heart of the other—still are they more eager to honour each the other, in eyes not so love-laden and dazzled with the splend-ours of their own creating.

And yet there is an aspiration stronger, deeper, more holy. It is the sanctity with which God has hallowed this human love. So subtle is its power over their frames, that they feel, for the time being, immortalised by its strength,—already imparadised by its purity.

Earth is to them an Eden evermore —

the verdure is more verdant; the sun never sets; the flowers are living gems.

In giving her his love, it returns to him fragrant as the summer night's dew, and as life-giving. He worships God more humbly, with deeper piety—he loves mankind with an overflowing warmth that sees no flaw—whose weakness he compassionates in proportion as he feels the strength of his own ineffable happiness, that, in the full power of his faith and trust, defies fate.

"Souls found here and there,
Oases in one waste of sin,
Where everything is well and fair,
And God remits his discipline.
Whose sweet subdual of the world,
The worldling scarce can recognise,
And ridicule against it hurled,
Drops with a broken sting and dies;
Yet, ever careful not to hurt,
God's honour, who creates success."

Remember—

"That God's grace is the only grace,
And all grace is the grace of God."*

C. Patmore.

Their religion ennobles their love, and their love beautifies and mellows their religion.

Envy could not touch them, because, as archangels, they dwelt in a sphere the borders of which envy could not pass.

Jealousy assumed an aspect divine. was jealous of the hours that parted them -of the air that encircled her-of the glances that he caught not. He was jealous of the leaves that brushed her dress-of the grass that bore her foot-of the stars that diamonded her path. He was jealous of the thoughts luminously blushing in her face. He surnamed himself proudly a lover! He, who had marshalled an army, won a victory, been as a God of mercy in hottest triumph, now gloried more than all in the name of lover! and found none of love's duties too trivial to be attended to. And that little crushed heart, which saw it all,—the heart that had opened, like the night-blowing passion-flower, in one fatal hour,—the

heart that panted for the drop of honey that was to be gathered within the innermost cup of the flower, and cherished there as the germ of life—and without which it must droop, perish, unfulfilling its destiny—was it possible this heart could live, devoid of honey, of life?

Was it possible this heart could witness a divine and overwhelming spring of honeydew poured upon a neighbouring flower, and not cry out, in anguish, that she was left dry, parched, withered.

It moaned in dumb anguish. It asked to die. It besought an equivalent, if such could be found. And the bells of a neighbouring church struck twelve, each tone seeming a solemn prayer. 237

CHAPTER XVI.

"Hail to the joyous day! With purple clouds
The whole horizon glows. The breezy spring
Stands loosely flowing on the mountain top,
And deals her sweets around. The sun too seems
As conscious of our joy, with brighter beams,
To gild the happy world. And all things smile."

THOMSON.

VERY early in the morning of the last

day in February we rose; we were going by the first train down to Lovel-Leigh, escorted by Mr. and Mrs. Clifford. They only knew of our intention the evening before, when her inquiries for John at last drew forth the secret, but which was to be no secret to her, when our guests were

Mr. Clifford, who regarded time as so

gone, for we required her assistance in

many ways.

much money, was grimly satisfied that it was our wish to start thus early. To explain the feeling that prompted us, was simply to talk to him in Greek. He muttered something about preparation, the desire to welcome the heiress home; but as she did not seem to care about it, why, it was so much money saved.

It was still dark when we entered the carriage, and as the train slowly rumbled on, as if mysteriously set in motion by invisible hands, in this murkiness of shade we gradually passed the ghostly glimmer of the still lighted lamps. The long rows of houses were faintly shadowed out, as if they were only dream-houses. A deeper darkness signified a gap in them, or the tall dead wall of a manufactory. Gradually, as the pace quickened, the rows of houses seemed as one,—the dark shadows as doors in them. The echoing sound of the train began to lose its hollow reverberation—it softened—expanded—a cool wind blew

in at the windows, with something of freshness in its touch. I gasped for all I could get. I was going home to my father's grave—there I should know whether I must live or die. My soul at present was stranded on a shore, as dark as the gloom through which we were hurriedly speeding. The longing for day was like the prayer of my heart for "light, more light,"—my eyes were pained with the fixed gaze into darkness,—now and then half-blended with the sudden uprising of something inexplicable, that was gone before the dazed eyes knew of what shape or name to call it.

Then I betook myself to omens.

If the day breaks bright and clear, "the Sun of Righteousness will rise" for me "with healing on his wings." If it lowers —if there is no sun—if thick clouds hang their heavy curtains over the earth, then must I die, sorrow-slain.

A faint silver streak began a lengthening line in the thick darkness,—a pallid, soft

light tremulously hovered over it. Through this there shone a star, so brilliant. it seemed to be that star which shines on the forehead of the seraph nearest God. tried to trace the outlines of a face - of a form, whose wings extended defined the silver rim just illuminating the horizon The star sank slowly; from east to west. the faint steps of dawn came softly stealing like warmth into a shivering heart. heavens were lighted from one end to the other, and the star sank to rest in curtains of primrose hues. The seraph's work was done. He had watched through the night. Night has gone; day is breaking.

In another hour we could see each other's faces, and trace the effects of that silence which tells more than speech.

In Mabel's countenance there was the exultation of profound content, softened by the susceptibility of pious gratitude for it. Now and then quick blushes chased each other over it, bringing forth the smile

she had lately used —a smile tremulously happy.

Pamela's happiness was not so expressive. Its very depth calmed her. She was returning home, having almost accomplished the deed for which she left it. That it was not wholly so, arose, more from the fact that what remained to be done could only be accomplished by the delicate soft touch of time. But of the issue she had no doubt.

From out of the pearl springs of her eyes, came now and then the tear of confident hope, the token of her strong faith in God. They came, because, silent else, there was no other outlet for "the heart burning within her."

The daylight was now broadly scattered over the land. In the east, lazily waiting, and motionless, were two or three long light clouds, their edges tipped with the rose colours of the coming sun.

Satisfied that no mist would mar his vol. III.

uprising, no vapour rise to bid him summon soft downy clouds with which to enwrap himself, I turned to look at my sisters.

In each I read that satisfaction of heart which belongs to high natures,—the smiles hidden in Mabel's eyes, the tears in Pamela's, were both expressive of an exquisite perception that God had tried them in the furnace of suffering, and not found them wanting.

They had not belied the souls He had given them, the nature they inherited from their ancestors, or the principles they had learnt from the lips of their father.

And what had I done?

There was for long no response to this question. In vain I asked it.

I was still asking, when we approached the end of our journey. I remembered that five times the train had stopped coming to London; five times it had stopped returning.

In a few minutes we caught a glimpse of John's expectant face.

Quickly, swiftly, we were out of the train. He guided us through the crowd; he beckoned to a coachman, seated on the box of a carriage, that bore a familiar appearance. Once within it, he gave a direction to the man in few words, and we drove off, leaving him behind.

We drove for three miles—every tree a friend, every cottage well known.

How silent we were!

We came to the turn that led down to the lodge gates, from whence, under an avenue a mile and a half long, the park road ran to the house—our home of Lovel-Leigh. But the driver stopped; descending from his box, he opened the carriage door, silently let down the steps; we got out.

Then Mabel, putting some money in his hand, thanked him; and we, turning through a wicket gate, walked the Sunday walk of the villagers as they went to church.

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The sun was now declining towards his rest. It was three o'clock; heavy, thick clouds were above him, as if the night was hurrying on. An early moon, like a swan's feather, floated up above our heads, and a cool wind sent the dry leaves pattering along in front of us; they seemed to chatter to each other that the little ladies had come home.

From out the bare transparent hedgerow the little birds skimmed on easy wing all round about us. They, too, twittered and rejoiced. Down we went into a little dingle, studded with long, leafless briar-bushes and brown tufts of dead fern, from amid which a few quiet sheep looked, their fleeces entangled with thorns. Mabel stooped, and freed one from captivity. Out on the down, Lovel-Leigh lay before us, the lake between us. Every casement was open, and the last blaze of the sun streamed into every window.

We stood but a moment clasping each

other's hands; the white smoke rose like feathery columns straight up towards heaven.

We knew the fires that were lit, the rooms that were now prepared to receive us—the cedar boudoir, the breakfast parlour, my sisters' room. Even the nursery chimney was filled with a volume of curling, twining, twisting vapour, that made us guess nurse was stirring the fire at that moment.

In turning from beholding our home, we entered a little pathway that led to the roofed gateway of the churchyard. Two ancient beeches guarded either side; beyond were the yew-trees; under their shade we passed on, entered the church porch, and knelt by our father's grave.

If in that moment of restoration to our home there arose in us once more the unutterable anguish of the remembrance of his loss, the feeling was caused by no ingratitude to God, but the rather from a complication of emotions, that, beginning at his death, had now gathered into a fulness of heart that, with one drop more, overflowed.

We had nerved ourselves to endure certain ills distasteful to us; they had seemed as nothing; while the loss of our father was so keen, all other things were absorbed by it. But the pressure withdrawn, the trial over, a retrospection of the past seemed to rush upon us as, it is said, all the scenes of his life pass through the mind of the drowning man.

Had we so acted as became the daughters of our father? Did we return to his grave as penitents ashamed to see it? Or, by God's grace, had we so acquitted ourselves in the world as to kneel there in the full confidence that we had in all things acted as he wished, and might turn to God for further blessings?

So we sat there long, until the yellow tinge of sun-setting changed to the silvery coldness of a high-sailing, placid moon, each absorbed in self-examination.

Mabel was the first to rise, her cheek flushed, her eyes radiant. She had sacrificed the family inheritance of exclusiveness to save the family name and estate. Her reward was great. She could kneel by her father's grave unimpeached, and take possession once more of the home of her ancestors as her right. She had worthily maintained its honour.

Pamela soon followed her.

The domestic nature of Pamela's affections had less to do with the past than the present. She thought not so much of her ancestors as of her father, and she desired to commune by his tomb on the difficulties and discouragements she had encountered "to save that soul alive" which lived in the body he had rescued from drowning. There was something still to be done before she was assured of the success of her pious endeavours. But that some-

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thing was so entirely dependent upon Ferdinand Home himself, she had no more to do now than pray for him. "She had done what she could." Here by her father she held self-counsel by herself—arraigned each act and thought before the bar of her own conscience—and rose from it satisfied, but humble—rejoicing, but piously grateful.

Then, when my sisters left me alone, they standing waiting in the church porch until I should join them, the moon rimming their figures and delicate profiles with a luminous pencil, I lay down on the chilly marble of my father's tomb. I pressed my hot face against it, and clasped it close with outstretched arms and beating pulses. I seemed to wish the cold shiver of my skin could penetrate my frame, congeal my sinews, and turn my heart into ice.

What had I done of which to tell my father? I was so little, so wayward — dumb; no one expected me to do much.

But I had done that which I ought to have left undone. I had given away my affections.

"Father, father," my heart said to the cold tomb, "where am I to go? what am I to do?"

And whispers seemed to rise up from out of the tomb:

- "Child, you are not the only one who has lived, who will live, lonely."
- "Yes, I know, father; but how did you bear it and live?"
 - "God decreed that thus it should be."
 - "And gave you no consolation?"
- "He bid me have patience, and I should see her again."
- "Of what use is patience to me? He is never to be mine, here or hereafter."
- "But you have an equivalent that I had not. My lot was simply 'Resignation.' At once I was bereft of that which made my life life, without one measure of equation—one hope of compromise—one set-

off to countervail the flood that poured over my Eden and drowned it with a waste of waters that nothing would assuage. Like Job, I was possessed of all things; like Job, I lost all in one hour. No servant came running with tidings—the one preparing the apprehensive heart for more and more until the measure was full. Mine was all at one blow. God said, 'I take this, your heart; I tear it from your breast; because it is My will.' 'So be it, Lord,' I answered. 'Not my will, but thine, be done.' And I lived, because he bid me live, resigned."

"And me; oh, my father, is there not a blessing also for me?"

"Yes, little loved one, bud of my Rose, there is also a blessing for thee. Thy sisters have dared an evil fate, and conquered it. They have resolutely uptorn a family sin. They have fought a fight in the world, with no other weapons than their own innocence and rectitude. They

have done well. But thou shalt do more. Thou shalt do that which will crown thee with the wreath of a conqueror. When thy father had to deliver up that which he most prized, it was to God he gave it. Thou shalt give up thy heart's desire to another. Thou shalt bestow on one you love well what you love most of all things. In secret shall this be done-known only to thy God, thy father, and the angels. Thus you will have the guerdon that emblazons heroism. My little Rose will wear in her heart the cross of magnanimity, and she will go about in the world cheerfully; for God has defined her work on earth. He makes a little mute girl to be a heroine -to conquer the wailing of an unbroken spirit, and turn it into the song of a triumphant soul, crowned with palm leaves."

"Rose is comforted," whispered Mabel, raising me up. "See, the child glows with God's joy."

And they kissed me, and then we kissed our father's tomb, and, leaving the church, we ran swiftly down to the lake.

There was the boat ready.

As Mabel and Pamela rowed me across, liquid silver dropped from their oars, so bright were the moonbeams. The great cedar stood up motionless, as if asleep.

The terrace door was open; we entered our home of Lovel-Leigh; evermore ours, with God's pleasure.

Then, and not till then, did we see a human being. Nurse, unable to contain her happiness longer, clasped us all three in her arms.

"Nature, no doubt, is to be curbed; but it's against all nature waiting longer. Mrs. Clifford and Mr. John had been so urgent to let the little ladies enter as if they had just been out a-pleasuring, because of their tender hearts, but it wasn't to be done. If they'd broke her head on the spot, welcome them in she must. Haugh-

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ton had never said a cross word until that day, when he called her an old fool. An old fool very likely; but it's better to be an old fool than a stock or stone."

CHAPTER XVII.

"Charitable they
Who, be their having more or less, so have,
That less is more than need, and more is less,
Than the great heart's good will."

SYDNEY DOBELL.

On the 9th of April, we opened our house of Lovel-Leigh, having restored it to the beauty and order of former days. With but few exceptions, we were surrounded by the same servants, for they gathered from far and near to offer themselves for the situations they had held before.

This was pleasant, in more ways than one. We loved to have the familiar faces about us, and they joyfully entered into fresh service with us, as if to atone for

the murmuring and selfishness they had displayed—though for so short a space.

On their birth-day, Mabel gave Pamela and me a deed of gift of each a third in the estate of Lovel-Leigh.

In pointing out my greater advantage, having still the fortune of my mother, though I could not touch it, until of age, Mabel said: ... "We will consider that a fund, upon which we may each draw, should we wish to do any deed of greater magnitude than our estate will warrant. But John Clifford has a piece of news for us all. When he took our grandfather's lockets to the jewellers, to have the miniatures inserted, the man pointed out to him Cingalese letters or characters in each locket. By his advice, John had them translated. Though all different, they all mean the same thing, and are similar to the verses of a poem. They say in mine, that if danger lurks near me, I shall find succour at some specified place in Ceylon.

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"In Pamela's — if her generous heart has not wealth sufficient to gratify it—there is some for her at this same place.

"In Rose's, that all things pretty and rare may be hers to amuse her, when her calamity weighs upon her spirit, — at Ceylon.

"John wrote to this direction, without informing us, because of our trouble and sorrow. And long ago he had an answer. It seems our great-grandfather left nephew to take care of the estate from which he made his money. The nephew was to have half the profits, and the rest were to be laid aside for us. If at the end of twenty years we did not claim them, or had discovered nothing regarding this money, the nephew, or his heirs, was to write and tell us; Mr. Clifford being in possession of a sealed communication from our great-grandfather, which was only to be opened twenty years after his death, telling him of this fact.

"But, sisters, the coffee plantations are now by no means so valuable as they were; and though the twenty years have elapsed within three of the time mentioned, there is not above 5,000% to be divided amongst us. This would have been of great assistance to us had the trial gone against us. The nephew, who bears the same name as our great-grandfather, upon hearing of the trial, sent to place at our disposal the whole of the proceeds, and asked if he should not sell the estate at once to raise all available funds.

"He will hear by the next mail how fortunate we have been. I now propose that we invite our relation to England, if he chooses to come, and that we will let him have our great-grandfather's estate at a reasonable sum of money—for that I believe is his desire—in return for his liberal kindness towards us in our distress."

We agreed with Mabel,—but as this episode in our history is a distinct thing, vol. III.

having nothing to do with any other part of it, beyond having more money than we expected,—I will finish it at once.

Our relation did not accept the invitation. He was a very aged man. But he gladly, for his children's sake, closed with our offer to buy the estate, and gave, with grateful thanks for our generous proposal, 2,000l. for it.

We kept up, long after his death, a mutual interchange of presents and letters, and were always gratified by hearing that the estate prospered, even when all others failed. In fact, the sagacity of our great grandfather in the choice of the situation, and the management of his plantation, was shown as vividly twenty years after his death as when he was alive.

And now, as I said before, we opened our house of Lovel-Leigh.

Mabel: invited her guests,—Miss Arlington, Otto, Mr. Moore, our kind Judge and his wife, my Lady Judge, and a daughter.

Pamela asked Miss Woodville, M. and Madame de Tancreville, Mrs. Home, and her daughter Olympia.

My guests were Mrs. Castleton and Arthur.

Pamela's arrived first. We wished them to be accustomed to us before others came.

Miss Woodville had our father's two rooms on the ground-floor, with a small tower or closet-room adjoining for her maid.

I liked Miss Woodville very much; and I felt that perhaps God had put it into Pamela's heart to be so earnest to go to her—for her trials had been sufficient. She had just reached that pitch of misery when she was ready to obey the advice of Job's wife—"to curse God and die."

But Pamela's soft pitying ministry had been like balm to her wounded spirit. Neither perhaps knew the extent of the influence exercised by the one and felt by the other at the time; but the fruits were visible now.

Miss Woodville's nature must have been a fine one: there was no disguise in it now; and there was so much to admire, so little to offend. A strong wholesome common sense marked every opinion, which, spoken with that sort of fearlessness peculiar to the blind, gave a force and vigour to her words that made each sentence remarkable.

I do not wonder that she had not agreed with M. and Madame de Tancreville. He was a thorough Frenchman, delicately neat and precise, with an access of politeness that made it absolute pain to sit, eat, breathe, or even think in his presence, he was so desirous to do it all for you; his sole occupation all day was to concoct pretty speeches, then to invent opportunities for bringing them in, and between whiles to obtain a patient listener to hear the history of his little maladies. His

"symstones," as he expressed it in English, appeared to contradict each other, not only every day, but every hour of the day; so that the various diseases under which he laboured, or feared might be his death, changed with such rapidity, we had much ado to remember upon which we were to condole with him.

Miss Woodville alone kept a faithful record; and if by chance overhearing "that his 'symstones' were alarming of a prostration of de nerve of de torax," would cry out—

"No, no, Monsieur, that does not come on until six o'clock. You are suffering now from a slight touch of fever. In an hour the gastric juices will make a violent attack on the 'estomac.' Madame will administer a 'leetle peel' of soda, and so on."

"Ah! Mees Voodville, you ere de wonderful womans, you ave de memorie of astonish; but I tells you of a new symstone. Ah, verily, mon amie, it is of that nature so grave—I must prepar—I must make an end of myself."

In addition to these little peculiarities, M. de Tancreville was always in a delicate agitation, lest, by some monstrous wickedness that belonged to the nature of that monster-man, he might, wholly without his will, but owing to the painful circumstance of his being born a monster, say, or do, or imply that which the delicate female ear blushed to hear. When in one of these little tempests, M. de Tancreville was wholly unmanageable, inexplicable, and wearisome.

He would dart into the room tragically, his little precise red curls all rumbled and disordered, his elaborately plaited shirt-frill thrust out of sight as if nothing white or pure belonged to him. He would bow profoundly, sigh deeply, grate his teeth, and dart out again. If the case was not very desperate, he would mysteriously and

ambiguously apologise to each of us in turns, though only to himself was the nature of the insult known. Altogether, he was an aggravating little man.

Madame was pious; her principal occupation, when not saying her beads, was embroidery. At this she worked with a steadiness and intensity that gave one the idea she was performing a penance. She was a tall meagre woman, with fine eyes, wholly without expression, and a complexion so utterly yellow and dead, it bore no resemblance to the skin of a human being.

Their affection for their long-lost daughter consisted, as far as outward acts were concerned, in constantly staring at her, and nothing else.

This she bore with great patience.

She was a handsome, grand woman, with a tragic voice and manner. These were never natural unless addressing her daughter. On the little lovely Olympia

she poured forth all the love of her nature, cooing like a fond mother-pigeon over her little white nestling. It was beautiful to see it.

Alas! for poor Ferdy.

As Pamela pleaded for him one day to his wife, she said —

- "No more, no more. I only do not hate him because you once loved him."
 - "But have you no thought for his soul?"
- "No, I have no thought of him at all, as he had none of my honour."
 - "But it is so grand to forgive."
- "Grand! how can you use such word of him, poor fool, of no heart or mind?"
- "But will you not let him see his child?
 —he must love her."
- "My child may not love both, but one or the other."
- "In that we differ. I would be glad that he should see my child and love her. It would make me love her more if she did that which I had failed to do—namely, lead him to God."

- "Ah, you are good,—too good. You would not thus think if you knew all."
 - "I can know no worse."
- "No worse! not even that he should write, even now, while I am at this your house, and say, swear, after his fashion, that he loves me, that he did not, he never loved you,—lies, all lies of you, his best friend."
- "I know that already: he did not love me. If Mabel had been then, as she was afterwards, the sole heiress of Lovel-Leigh, she would have been his choice. He loved neither of us."
- "He did not love you? Swear it to me." and the poor long-stricken heart shone out at her eyes with a wild joy that spoke of the fires within—the jealousy, the love, that was yet at the bottom of all.
- "I am persuaded that if Ferdy loves any one in the world it is you. Why else did he keep your letters?—he, usually so careless, so thoughtless. I feel sure every one of mine went into the fire, perhaps only half read."

"Oh! but—but—wherefore are you thus for him? You go to his aunt, you nurse her, you care for her,—is it not for his sake? You try to find me, I am found, you rejoice for his sake. You make me to think of forgiveness, pardon of my great wrongs,—it is for his sake. And that he may see his child, so beautiful, so good, to call him by that lovely name of father; all for his own sake. Is not this now, though of a character so noble, so high, so exalted,—is not this love for him on your side?"

"No; if I like not any part of my life, it is that part wherein I fancied myself in love with him. Let me explain to you why I am anxious for his soul."

There was no lack of perception in Mrs. Home. As Pamela drew with vivid pencil the description of our father, our love for him, our thoughts that were his thoughts, our hopes his hopes, our entire oneness with him,—she comprehended what Pamela desired to express, with an immediate conviction.

"Ah, what love! You remind me of the angels. No, it is true, you could not love Ferdinand Home, he could not love you. I am satisfied. Well, friend! friend of the heart so pure, so exalted! I will pay back that debt so great that I owe you, after the manner that shall please you best. Give me time. Let me be a while near you, that I may perchance catch of your goodness. I will promise my friend this,—Olympia shall see her father. Of his soul let us not say much; but I will pray, even as I know you pray."

CHAPTER XVIII.

"I watched and waited with a steadfast will;

And, though the object seemed to flee away

That I so longed for, ever, day by day,

I watch'd and waited still."

ANON.

MABEL'S visitors came next.

Amiable as we had thought the good Judge, in private life he was adorable.

Such a general flow of mirth and wit; such enjoyment of the country air, the flowers, the daisies, the wayside weeds; such daily plunges into the lake, with sportive swims from one end to the other, before the sun was up to behold such doings; such evident pleasure in feeding the poultry, coaxing the cows, making friends with the ponies, and petting the

cats. Surely if this was that grave, solemn, austere Judge before whom we stood, in peril of what was dearer to us than life, where was his gravity, his severity, his judgment? In truth he was the boy of the house.

As for my Lady Judge, she was large in person; and though I might say her mind was large, I mean by that to express it was largely developed in indolent selfishness. Two things alone moved her—the Judge her husband one, which was no doubt very proper; but I think it was not so much the husband that occupied her mind, as the Judge. What the Judge said, thought, and did was her only conversation.

- "The Judge is out walking," said she to Miss Woodville, by way of being entertaining to the blind lady.
- "Indeed! isn't it usual for judges to walk?" was the answer.
- "Not very, I believe; but my Judge is peculiar—very singular in everything."

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- "So I should think; they tell me he is in the lake every morning for an hour."
 - "'Tis true; the Judge swims."
- "Does he? Then he is not likely to be drowned."
- "I hope not; the Judge swims well, remarkably well, I am told."
- "All I can say of the Judge is, that whether he swims well or ill he is the best companion I have had for many a long day."
- "Yes, the Judge is an excellent companion."

The Lady Judge's other occupation was the care of her chin. It was a triple chin, and appeared to have increased without due regard to space and cap-strings. All day long was this chin being adjusted, and twenty times a day were the cap-strings removed from the first chin and placed under the second. Sometimes they disappeared altogether under the third chin.

Miss Judge was at first haughtily

high: afterwards she descended a little, and as we grew more intimate, condescended to give us her unbiassed opinion as to what she thought of us all. Her judgment being pretty favourable, she considered it right to tell us so, and to give us advice upon various matters, the principal being dress. After a few lectures, she ended by saying our style was not bad, and if we did not dislike others copying it, she would be glad if our maid would give her maid instructions.

She was aware she asked what was wholly unpardonable, but the Judge (he was the Judge to her, never her father) having done us some little service, perhaps we would overlook the offence on that account.

Graciously permitting this supposed demand on our good nature, she became animated, not to say happy, in our society.

She had fine handsome features like her father, but without his bright blue eyes.

Her chin bore evidence of "coming events casting their shadows before." It would be her mother's over again. "Pray heaven," thought I, "that she may think less about it!"

She had narrow shoulders, a thick waist, red hands, and flat feet, with a constant and never-hidden perception that they were precisely the other way. Altogether, as I sat and looked at them after a capital gallop with the glorious Judge, or heard a playful bit of repartee between him and Miss Woodville, I wondered what sort of affinity there was between him and his wife and daughter. He must have felt, even through the halo of his genial nature, that they were as different from him as east and west, as summer and winter. He paid them all sorts of little attentions, such as bringing them in flowers, recommending his favourite dishes, asking them to walk ride with him, -all of which were graciously received with pompous thanks. "It was so kind of the Judge." "The Judge was always so thoughtful." "The Judge never forgot them—never."

I concluded, after deep study, that it was fortunate they saw very little of each other for nine months in the year. During the sitting of his court, they only met night and morning, and sometimes not even so much, as my Lady Judge had her duty to pay to society, and so bore her daughter and her triple chin out into the gay world.

For the three months' vacation, they as often got through it entirely separated,—he in Scotland, she in Paris,—as not.

Thus they continued happy in the idea that they were very well-suited to one another, while they proved to the world at large how beneficent was that order of our Creator, that we should work. Whether by brains or hands, blessed is work, to get us over or through the mischances of life. As for Otto, he lived on the lake with Olympia and me, when the Judge did not

require it to swim in. But for Miss Arlington and Mr. Moore, it was a time of fond regrets, nervous shiverings, struggles, and misgivings.

He had tendered his hand for her acceptance, and she was deliberating as to the propriety of accepting it.

That she was something prudish, or rather old-maidish, was true.

She was warm in her praises of the disinterested and noble manner in which Mr. Moore had made his offer. He knew full well of her former attachment to her cousin.

"He did not want her love so much as her friendship. He was getting old, and wanted a kind heart by his fireside to make it cheerful. He never meant to die solitary and uncared for. When he was young and had feelings, his highest ambition was to marry and set up a loving household as soon as he had gathered together enough to make them tolerably comfortable. She knew, none better, why he had not done so.

"The usages of society would not permit them to live together in a friendly manner. They must go decently to church, just for the name of the thing; and what great effort was that? They could slip in some morning promiscuous, and it would be over before she knew it was begun.

"She was scared by a bugbear. She had such a kind generous heart. If she would but consent to be his friend, and look after his house and himself, well! there was a store of money laid by, for which he had no earthly use. She might do what she liked with it.

"Let us, my dear Emily, look at it in a sensible business point of view. I sadly want some one to take care of me. Must I lay myself open to the tender mercies of a vituperative, libidinous housekeeper? You become old and require tender care? Behold yourself in the claws of a strong, police-loving, onion-eating maid-of-all-work? The thing is impossible. Let us take care

of each other. You owe me a little—very little, I allow—compensation for depriving me early in life of all feeling. I think I perceive a slight return. Probably you may be the means of restoring me to my proper place among men—a place I have lost through the implacability and general sternness of my character." Thus he argued.

And she still sighed—demurred—feared. To finish their history, they left us at the end of a month, in much the same state as when they arrived.

Acting, it is supposed, on the advice of the Judge, Miss Arlington was no sooner settled alone, in a little murky set of apartments near London—Otto and his tutor having departed abroad—than Mr. Moore bestirred himself.

He went every evening from eight until ten, and sat sipping tea in the murky apartment, as if it was a matter of course.

Once or twice Miss Arlington tearfully

protested against this devoted attention, as likely to raise a breeze of slander against her fair name.

"Ah, true!" responded the heartless man; "the world is so vicious." But he came at seven the next evening.

After a month of this courtship, Miss Arlington was electrified one Sunday at hearing a familiar name uttered by the clergyman among the banns of marriages he was publishing. That it was Emily Arlington she was nervously certain.

Too timid to rise and make her protest in the church, she nerved herself up to making a solemn appeal to Mr. Moore upon such unwarranted—such unprecedented conduct. By eight o'clock she was delighted to find herself, for the first time in her life, seriously angry. What cruel, what severe, what sharp words would she not use to Mr. Moore—stabbing him to the very soul!

She was so occupied repeating her lesson

over and over again, that the clock struck nine, and still no Mr. Moore.

All her anger had been stirred up, and set boiling for nothing. He never came at all.

Wise Moore!

On the Monday morning, as if from simultaneous arrangement, arrived by the post all our congratulations and commendations upon having at last consented to make Mr. Moore happy. We praised her, we lauded her, we congratulated ourselves, we desired her acceptance of all our bridal gifts, which would be sent to her that day, and in fact, so clenched the matter, that by five o'clock that evening, as was reported by the maid of the apartments, Miss Arlington was sitting in the midst of a world of parcels. some opened, some not, tearfully reading letters between whiles of unpacking, and altogether very far from being angry or unhappy.

At eight came Mr. Moore. He does not

know, or will not tell, and she does not know, how the matter was explained and forgiven. But in the course of the evening, by the help of the man belonging to the apartments,-mysteriously absent all day, and when wanted, generally to be found coming out of the cellar,—a deed or settlement was signed. By this, Mrs. Moore that was to be, came into immediate possession of five hundred a-year, and in case of the departure of Mr. Moore out of this world into another, of five thousand a-year. During the next three weeks, according to the testimony of the astonished maid of the apartments, parcels came all day and every day.

Mr. Moore chose to think it was his business to provide the trousseaux. Consequently the murky apartments became filled to desperate repletion with parcels. The end of all this was—with a wicked leer of satisfaction in his twinkling eyes—this base, triumphant, scheming old man,

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bore poor, pale, trembling, Miss Arlington into church, and then and there married her,—the only spectators of this lawless proceeding being a friendly brother barrister and Mrs. Castleford, with the clerk, a large-bonneted pew-opener, and a crowd outside.

But we have anticipated this story by some months.

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CHAPTER XIX.

"As slow our ship, with foamy track,
Against the wind was cleaving,
Her trembling pennant still look'd back
To that dear isle 'twas leaving.
So loath we part from all we love,
From all the links that bind us;
So turn our hearts where'er we rove
To those we 've left behind us." MOORE.

THREE days after Mabel's, and ten after Pamela's, arrived my guests,—Sir Arthur and Mrs. Castleford.

I stood on the steps to receive them, and as the carriage door was opened, I sprang in before they could get out, kissing them both with ardour.

"What a darling it is!" said Arthur, returning my welcome with all his heart.

I thought it right thus to receive my brother. So now we were all assembled, and we began a royal time, of which each day was a history in itself.

We, the three ladies of Lovel-Leigh, gave a series of entertainments to our neighbours, in which, supported by Mrs. Castleford, Mabel did the honours to perfection. In fact, it was impossible for dinner parties to go off better; for what with the disposition of every one to be pleased, the company in the house was such as one rarely met in the country, especially at this particular period of the year.

The wit and learning of the Judge, the condescension of my Lady Judge, and her imposing chin, the Mayfair conversations and experiences of Miss Judge, together with the wonderful fortune of seeing a hero like Sir Arthur, were perhaps our most prominent fascinations.

The distinguished foreigners staying with us, the learned barrister, Mr. Moore, a

viscount, though so young, and last, though not least, that shrewd clever woman, with her wide open eyes, supposed to be blind, also had their attractions.

If there was a debt of hospitality due from the Lovels to the county, we commenced paying it off with a liberality that promised both principal and interest.

As for Mrs. Forbes, she worshipped us with the gravity and fervour of a devotee. We embodied in our persons all the graces and all the virtues, as she rapturously declared to every new comer. Mr. Forbes contented himself with saying once to Mabel, "Miss Lovel, I have not known a happy moment from the time you left until now."

And we believed him. For he, as our pastor, ought to have stood in the light of a father to us, when we lost our own, and fell into the snare set for us. But this remorse did him good; his mind awoke out of the twilight into which he had suffered it to dream away the days, and startled

with the sentence, "Thou art neither hot nor cold; I will spew thee out of my mouth," he had awakened for his everlasting good. And for hers also in some measure.

While our guests, the "Judges," remained with us, Arthur paid court to her he loved, as a knight worships the princess of his dreams and devotion, at a lowly distance. Consequently Miss Judge, something obtuse, took possession of him, and claimed him as a kindred soul, strayed from the charmed circle of Mayfair.

"Pray don't," I heard him say to her at dinner one day. "I have done all that, and am perfect in my lesson. It was repeated at every party I attended during my last week in London. Talk to me of daisies and buttercups. Have you seen many lambs yet? Are the cowslips blooming? Does Miss Lovel treat us to syllabubs? And when are we to go and have tea in the dairy?"

Miss Judge feebly informed him he was nearly as country-mad as the Judge. "A most pleasant madness. The fit should come on the first haymaking day, and never cease until the last wagon-load of corn was carried to the stack. We would be up and out with the sun, coming home with the lady moon beaming tenderly on us. We would gather the roses, when their burning cheeks have been cooled by autumn breezes, and go out and watch the lilies, folding up their bridal dresses of satin from the taint of the night air. Ah me, my dear Madam! who would mope in London if they might run riot in the country?"

"Very true," murmured the young lady; "I think the Judge ought to hold some of his courts in the country."

They remained with us,—the Judge family,—ten days, during which it became a settled thing that whenever he wanted fresh air and a swim, the Judge was to consider Lovel-Leigh the only place where such things could be had in perfection.

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- "Which she will share," said Mabel softly, and blushing deeply.
- "Share!" murmured Arthur, a deep glow tinging his very brow, and a voluminous breath swelling his chest.
- "Yes," again said Mabel, one sudden lifting of the lids displaying her eyes full of soft light and joy. "I will not be a soldier's wife unless I go where he goes—share what he shares—face danger as he faces it;—speak for me, Pamela."
- "Yes, Arthur," said Pamela, looking up, and realising for the first moment what we gave Arthur in giving him Mabel. "Yes, she will be no longer ours. She will be yours,—you will remember how precious she is to us."
- "I will hold her second to mine honour, and will not seek her sisters' faces if I wrong her in a thought."
- "We doubt nothing; but oh! Mabel, Mabel, how shall we live without thee?"
 - "I do not desire to take her away at

present. I wish to live with you—I and my mother."

And so it was settled; but, behold, even that very evening we were brought, as it were, face to face with our own words, we were called upon, while yet the sound of them was in our ears, to fulfil them.

A telegram from the Horse Guards required Sir Arthur Castleford's instant presence upon a matter of the gravest import.

"This means immediate service, probably India. I must leave by the mail train that goes through Rudchester at two in the morning."

Poor Mrs. Castleford! She fell at once into that abandonment of woe, with which a sudden shock will prostrate the calmest mind.

Mabel hastened to her side, and after a while led her from the room.

Arther strode up and down.

At that moment I was wicked enough to rejoice that duty, country, and gratitude were all forgotten for Mabel's sake. We three, Miss Woodville, Olympia, and I, were in a group together. Miss Woodville was quick to understand me, if I touched her fingers; but Olympia was generally the interpreter between us.

As I made them understand my thoughts Arthur suddenly caught the meaning. Lifting me from the stool on which I was sitting, he placed me on the arm of a sofa, so that my face was not much below his.

- "Oh, Rose! little fairy-gifted Rose, whom none gainsay—whose least sign is a law—whose merest look is met by love—whose touch is a command,—will you use your powerful interest for me? Will you guide me rightly, with that instinct as fine as heaven's light, and tell me, if the words spoken this morning are to be remembered or forgotten?"
- "Remembered! Oh, Rose! express it more clearly."
- "Fulfilled! God bless your pretty speaking eyes, and you, Pamela?"

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"Yes, Mabel is yours. Brother, we give her to you."

He enclosed us in a fond embrace.

"I must go and prepare. Call me, Rose, when Mabel returns."

"Now, that is a man," observed Miss Woodville, "who, through a sudden surprise, has forgotten himself. To-morrow he will be all right, and will see and wonder at his own selfishness in wishing to carry Mabel off in such a hurry. Dear me, what says this little restless being? You will endanger my finger. I am perfectly aware that you don't agree with me, Rose. Though I am blind, and you dumb, I can understand that."

"She makes signs, grandmamma, that Sir Arthur has not forgotten himself. This is what I read from her fingers:—These two have plighted their troth; they are now one. Where Arthur goes, so will Mabel. He will not ask Mabel to go, because he knows she will offer to do so.

It is thus that these two love each other 'in full trust.'"

"Pooh, pooh! don't let her go, Rose: here we all are so comfortable; and to have our party broken up for such non-sense as love! I won't have it."

"Grandmamma, there is no nonsense in love. I love you. Ah, now, see here!"

At that moment Arthur and Mabel entered at different doors. For a moment each stayed in their course. He was as a statue, but for the glowing eyes fixed on Mabel.

She looked at Pamela—at me; then advanced. So did we. We each took a hand; and, as the rushing blood covered her face and neck, we drew her to Arthur, and placed the hands in his. As he clasped them close his eyes asked a question. The soft voice said clearly—

"I go where you go."

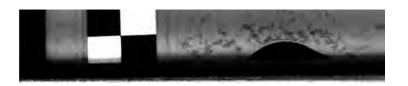
It is enough of that time; I can write no more.

Obeying the telegram, Arthur went to London by the mail train. Before eleven we received another from him. He was to sail for India in ten days. That evening his mother went up to him. She undertook to get everything that would be needful for Mabel.

As for us, we only followed Mabel's steps from morning to night. We hung about her; we treasured every word she said. We bore up, so that not a tear might dim the bright remembrance of these last hours with us.

And on the ninth day Arthur returned with his mother—thin, careworn, but radiantly happy. His mother said he had not slept but in a chair for nights, so eager was he that nothing might be forgotten.

On the tenth morning, dressed in the white muslin frocks our father loved so well, we walked to church early in the morning. There Mr. Forbes married our Mabel to Sir Arthur Castleford. We had



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barely time to kiss and bid them farewell, when, covering her with a long cloak, Nurse taking off her veil and substituting a bonnet, he hurried her into a carriage, and, ere six o'clock that evening, they had embarked, and were steaming away to the far distant lands of India.

CHAPTER XX.

Ah, miserable! what shall hide thee now?
What depths of darkness cover thy despair?
Take ashes on thy brow,
Dust for thy garment wear.
All lost, all shivering, all desolate,
Struck to the soul with most immortal woe.
Thou livest all too late;
Take up thy staff and go."
ANON

OH, Mabel, Mabel! how we mourned after you! You will never know it, because we shall never tell it, though you may define it. Only to one like Arthur would we have spared you.

But for Miss Woodville we should have been utterly desolate and cast down, for Mrs. Castleton had the impression upon her mind she was parted from her son for ever; she should never see him again. All that day we were wretched, and we awoke in the morning with the perception of rising up only to mourn still more.

As we wandered into the garden, down by the lake, over all the paths last trodden by Mabel, we heard the sound of carriagewheels.

We imagined, perhaps, that M. and Madame de Tancreville had returned.

But in a few moments, without a hat, with his odd hair more odd than ever, and a wildness in his eyes, Mr. Rivers stood before us.

He seemed to gaze beyond us -- to look all round.

"It is not true; Miss Lovel? Where is she? What is this the papers say? What lie is it they publish?"

His voice was hoarse and broken.

In her astonishment Pamela gave no answer.

He tried to compose himself, though he shivered as if a cutting wind went through

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He saw in our faces its truth.

- "But how can it be? She only saw him in February. There was no rumour. It is not true. Only give me hope."
- "Mr. Rivers, you could never have had any hope? She would not have married you."
- "I don't know, I don't know. Whatever I have set my heart upon I have gained. Don't annihilate me at once—don't."

I never saw such despair and anguish.

- "Will you see Mr. Clifford?"
- "No, I only wish to see Miss Lovel—Mabel."
 - "Let us go to the house, then."

He ran eagerly back, while we slowly followed.

Fortunately John Clifford appeared. Poor John, he was so sad,—mourning for the loss of one of his little ladies, but yesterday married, and withdrawn from his sight and care. We told him our perplexity.

He hastened after Mr. Rivers, begging

us to keep out of his way, which we gladly promised.

And Pamela going to sit with Miss Woodville, I wandered through the garden, in among the laurels, and hid myself to commune with my own soul.

At my feet the lake cast wavelets, plashing to me a gentle sound of peace and happiness. In the midst of the mourning for Mabel, came the full voluminous comfort to my heart, that I had conquered myself. Before me, calm and pure, rested It should be, with God's help. the lake. the type of my future life. Mabel was married and gone. It was not possible that Pamela, with her wealth of tender affections, would remain unwedded. it was different with me - already separated from the world by God's decree, and only fitted for home and home duties. On me it would devolve to live and die at Lovel-Leigh. With a paradise on earth, I was to prepare for the paradise in heaven.

therefore behoved me to think with what that life should busy itself.

First, there were almshouses to be built for the poor and aged, no matter of what country. They were to be my father's memorial; the inmates his guests, as it were.

Then schools—schools of a peculiar kind—a sort of happy mixture of the old dame style and the more modern mode; but substituting, for much that was taught in them, useful knowledge; for the boys, gardening, farming, basket-making, matweaving, netting, carpentering, and such like. For the girls, cooking, house-work, knitting, sewing, in every branch.

As for our church, it required nothing. The Lovels had never failed to keep that a model of "The House of Prayer."

Mrs. Castleford, I concluded, would always live with us. That had been Mabel's last request, and to us so young it was a request that, in granting, we obtained more than we gave.

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Then my future pleasures. There was an everlasting spring of these in the care, and order, and beautifying of this—our home of Lovel-Leigh.

The first efforts of the love of adornment and taste had broken out in no higher thing than dress. I was now to elevate it by exercising the talent conjointly with the great artist Nature. And already I felt the glow within me of the perception that in worshipping Nature I should be led onwards, step by step, to the purer worship of the God "Who created all things so richly to enjoy." A thrill of some holy influence seemed to vibrate through every nerve. I half expected a voice might rise out of the lake, and commend me, or that the laurel bushes might be burnished with the dimly visible presence of some holy being, bending over me in love and watchfulness.

I heard a sound—a running footstep—a sudden plunge into the lake.

In a moment I ran to the boat-house, and was out on the lake almost before I breathed again.

The lake was all over ripples of circling waves, that pursued each other with a vehemence that betokened some great commotion.

I waited motionless.

In less than a minute two hands were thrust out of the water. I approached them, and gently placed an oar in their way. It was grasped with the tenacity of a struggle between life and death. In my agony lest I should be too weak to retain my hold, I was conscious of a painful spasm in my throat; pricking stings all over my face seemed to draw up every nerve in it to agony. But a voice, unknown to me, never heard before, called over the water, in clear shrill accents—" John, John Clifford."

He came at the call, and plunged into the lake in a moment. Out of it he drew forth, not without a struggle, Mr. Rivers, half-drowned. As for me, I was sick and faint, but I assisted with the boat, to which John clung.

He placed Mr. Rivers on the bank, and then, assisting me out, he knelt on the grass and held my hand, looking at me imploringly.

Again the spasm came into my throat, the stinging sensation to my face; but I, anxious as he was, heard the sound "John" again. It was from me it came. It was my voice that spoke it.

"Thank God, thank God—and my name is the first word she ever uttered."

I sat down stunned with the fact.

John ran up to the house, and presently brought wine, and Haughton. I drank some, and then rose to leave them to restore Mr. Rivers.

I went straight to my own room—to the looking-glass. I made the effort—for it was an effort—to say "John" again. I imagined, I suppose, that I could only say

that word. As I pronounced it, I saw that my face contracted, and was wholly disfigured with spasmodic twitches.

So my new gift was not to be without an alloy. I still sat trembling and sick—for how long I cannot tell.

Then Pamela came seeking me. Tears in her tender eyes, a glow all over her face.

She said nothing, but gazed.

Then I threw my handkerchief over my head, and from beneath it came the word "Pamela."

"Ah, Rose, how wonderful are the ways of God! To our greatest enemy we owe our greatest mercy. Let us thank God."

We did so. And for the first time in my life I said "Amen."

Then she laid me on my little bed, and wrapping me up warm—for I shivered as if smitten with an ague—she said—

"Now I go to Mr. Rivers. This know-

ledge will, I doubt not, work good in him: We know not, neither will we ask, how he fell into the water. It is enough that he is already grateful to John for saving him. But when he hears of this—the blessing God has sent us in lieu of our Mabel—then we may hope, oh, my Rose! that this man, with his dark earthly soul, will take this lesson to his heart, 'that out of evil God brings good.' He has done us good in spite of himself."

So beautiful were the thoughts of Pamela.

Mr. Rivers received the news as she hoped.

Humbled, penitent, he left Lovel-Leigh an altered man.

We never knew if it was accident or otherwise that so nearly caused his death.

Pamela's last words to him were—

"Remember, Mr. Rivers, that ambition is a noble mistress. Serve and love her well, and she will reward you."

"For what purpose?" he murmured.

"That you may leave behind you a name which all men may honour, and none despise,—a name that history may mention as one who conquered fate,—a name to excite others 'to go and do likewise.'"

"I will try," he answered.

But the trial failed in this country. He could no longer command the esteem of men. And he experienced in full bitterness, the difficulty—almost impossibility, to regain the place he had forfeited in the minds of honest men. After years of struggle, we heard of him, in Australia, rising rapidly.

Now, as for me, my new power was more painful to use than not.

Without promising that I shall ever be free from the spasms that contort every feature as I speak, the physicians declare that only by constant use shall I make them less, and retain the power of speech at all.

This is most irksome to me.

And did not Pamela, in sisterly love, take no heed to my signs, but insist on words, I should forego the attempt altogether.

"You must say 'Mabel' to her when we see her again, afterwards I shall not tease you so much." Very few others among those around me cared to put me to the pain of speaking.

They preferred the signs they understood so well.

But as years went on, and I became stronger, I spoke better. But even to this day I confine myself to a word, or perhaps two, and some I cannot pronounce at all.

As for John, after hearing his name, he never desired to hear it again; he would not put his least little lady to such pain.

The singularity of being dumb without deafness, was now explained. The evil lay in the nerves. As some families transmit from generation to generation peculiar

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idiosyncracies, so did I inherit a frail nervous system that had for certain years prevented all power of speech, which was obtained at last only to give me more pain than pleasure.

CHAPTER XXI.

"Love thyself last; cherish those hearts that hate thee; Corruption wins not more than honesty; Still on thy right hand carry gentle peace, To silence envious tongues." Shakspeare.

To retrace my steps a little.

Some weeks after Mabel's sudden marriage and departure, the De Tancrevilles and Mrs. Home returned to us, for no further purpose than to pick up Miss Woodville and Olympia, and all return to Redheugh together.

- "And Ferdy?" asked that gentlesthearted Pamela.
 - "I have seen him," said Elise, haughtily.
 - "And his future?"
- "With Miss Woodville's permission, he may come to Redheugh to see his child."

- "And you?"
- "That man is not the man I loved. He has added yet another sin to all the long catalogue of the others."
- "True; but a life spent among you all will wean him from it. He will be ashamed of it in presence of his child."
- "That is his last chance. In faint imitation of you, exalted friend, I accord him that last chance."
 - "You will be rewarded, Elise."
- "At least I will not have my conscience burdened."

On the matter being propounded to Miss Woodville, she answered abruptly —

- "What! have I not done with the everincreasing history of human infirmity? I have my child Olympia, she is my heir. Let the fellow go to the dogs, as is fitting."
- "But if this last chance is vouchsafed by God, what if we neglect it?"
 - "It will be laid at our door, I suppose.

But class up the sum of his iniquities. He has cursed my name, my house, my heart, with every blight of evil. Yet, has he not so cursed me, but that there is another one still more deeply wounded. And, but by God's grace, there would have been a third that might have cried to heaven for retribution, with louder cries than us all."

- "By the grace of God that rescued me from such misery, so do I pardon him."
- "'He has sinned with a cart-rope' against us all."
- "We will forgive him, as God forgives us."
- "Well, take your own way, child. I don't pretend to be good; I have sufficient reason for hating him, therefore I do so; or, more properly speaking, I despise him. I have forgotten him. I believe I was unhappy once about him, but, like a noxious exhalation, it has passed away, and I remember no more of it, or of him."

Pamela steadily refused to go back, and

be like the ministering angel among them all.

- "No, if you are going to be forbearing, forgiving, to act nobly, do it as it should be done—nobly."
- "Can the Ethiop change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" broke in Miss Woodville sarcastically.
- "Is the Lord's hand shortened that it cannot save?" answered Pamela.
- "He is a barren fig-tree. 'Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?'"
- "We will pray the Lord, 'Let it alone this year.'"
- "Child, remember—'The soul that sinneth, it shall die.'"
- "'As I live,' saith the Lord, 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked.'"
- "' As for the ungodly, they are like the chaff which the wind scattereth away from the face of the earth."
- "'The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness."

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- "'The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God.'"
- "'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made white as wool."
- "'Men shall clap their hands at him and hiss.'"
- "'They that turn any to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever."
- "'God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down into hell.'"
 - "God will have all men to be saved."
- "Go to, child, the Bible is more full of mercy than wrath."
 - "As we should be."
- "Well, granted; fetch pen and ink, and write, in God's name."
 - "Nay, madam, in yours."

So Ferdy, sent for (this was the account Elise gave us afterwards), came to Redheugh within a week of their return home.

That little germ of natural feeling, on knowing he was a father, appeared so far significant of a change in Ferdy's character, that even Miss Woodville allowed, if his natural personal vanity was absorbed in paternal pride, she had some hope that he would lead a respectable life for the future, if nothing more.

His visit was only to last a week, and the proud-spirited Frenchwoman did not in that week give him the slightest hope of a reconciliation with herself.

If she had desired to chain him to a consistent line of conduct for once in his life, she could not have adopted a surer method.

He left Redheugh sincerely anxious so to conduct himself as to ensure the repetition of a summons there.

To say that Ferdy ever became a worthy character (he had not the materials within him to form either a fine or a good one) is hazarding more than I can vouch for.

He was now upwards of forty years of age; his constitution a little broken.

The misery of having no home, no wel-

come anywhere, no friend, to one whose days had been passed in the perpetual sunshine of love and hospitality, was felt by his volatile mind as an evil it was impossible to live and endure.

By slow but sure degrees he had shut homes and doors against him that were never to open to him again.

He who had formerly been welcome everywhere was now only suffered to enter his natural home upon sufference.

This may have had some influence on his weak, unprincipled character.

Then he had no longer the life and spirits of younger years to carry off disagreeables—to drown the remembrance of them in fresh excitement.

He felt himself growing old.

He could not disguise from himself the change in the handsome Ferdy of other days.

Again, he was poor. Not to have the wherewithal to lavish as he pleased was misery.

But to want even so much as a common meal, began to rise up, before the forebodings of the hour, as an actual and neverabsent fear.

Last of all, there was his child.

The old vanity broke out, and indeed was sufficiently fed, as he looked at his blooming and beautiful girl.

To hear so lovely a creature call him father raised within him the only honest and good feeling he had ever experienced.

So that, altogether, what change did occur in Ferdy arose a good deal out of his besetting sins.

It was for his best interests to lead a respectable life, that he might be able to live at all.

And it was delightful for him to ride out with his child, and present her everywhere as "my daughter." Had she been plain and stupid, it is probable the paternal feeling would only have awakened in his heart to die.

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We saw him very seldom; but we knew that by degrees Redheugh again became his home. Whether Elise ever pardoned him in her heart we know not. We only could see that he was something afraid of her, and that his stay at Redheugh was still on such precarious footing that he was banished every now and then, and only readmitted upon abject submission.

If Pamela ever mourned over the little fruit there was to show in him for all she had done, it did not make her unhappy. She probably saw that wisdom and integrity were gifts from God, and to bestow them by mortal hand was a supposition as presumptuous as impossible.

That his downward course was stayed no one could doubt. To that satisfaction was added the twofold gratification of restoring Elise and Olympia to their proper sphere, and causing Miss Woodville's closing years to be the happiest she had ever spent.

Surely all this was sufficient to make so tender a heart sing with joy; and it may be questioned if there ever dwelt a purer or happier spirit in any being than in Pamela. She lived through her feelings, and made them ministers to her for all things good and praiseworthy.

CHAPTER XXII.

"Day is past!
Stars have set their watch at last;
Founts that through the deep wood flow
Make sweet, sounds, unheard till now;
Flowers have shut with fading light;
Good night!" Mrs. Hemans.

THE records that I have contributed to the family history bid fair to outnumber those of my grandmother.

I will extract a few bearing upon the great episode of our lives,—"the trial," and the different persons connected with it.

Our first letters from Mabel—how they were welcomed!

The sudden illness and death of Mrs. Forbes from scarlet fever. A niece of Mr.

Forbes has come to live with him—a nice, sensible, well-informed girl, who makes him, and indeed all the village, alive with her cheerful, happy manner and quiet good sense.

· Mr. Forbes looks already a different person. His appearance is altogether so much neater. His coat is brushed, the collar properly arranged. His surplice is always clean, and seems tidily put away every week. He looks stouter, younger, more healthy.

He is to be met walking about his parish every day, sometimes accompanied by his niece Patty, whose blooming complexion is the admiration of every one, charming the eyes of the old and feeble.

Horace Warleigh comes here very often. They say few so young have attained such literary honours. Methinks Sister Pamela has taken lately to very obtuse studies.

Must I hint to Mabel that for the second time there seems likely to be a matrimonial alliance between the Lovels and Warleighs?

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She would be pleased; but oh! she cannot picture to herself the change in our Pamela. The difference between this love and the last.

A new air envelopes her, all golden, rosy, perfumed; it seems to fill her with a sensitiveness to good and noble thoughts, that urges her to love us more, to worship God more devoutly; to shape her life so that we look at her, and can see no fault in anything that she does.

So ennobling is a pure love.

[Three years later].

Such excitement as the door bell rang! Mrs. Castleford almost outran me in her excitement to welcome her grandson.

A fair and noble boy, rather more than two years old, a young Linton Lovel Castleford, entrusted to our care by Mabel and Arthur.

He was a mixture of both parents.

He looked at us with a fearless frank

gaze; but he only smiled when he saw Pamela sitting with her six weeks' old baby on her lap. He had left his mother clasping his little sister to her heart, to stifle the pang with which she parted from her first-born; and he put Aunt Pamela into the vacant place, his childish heart had kept mourning for his mother.

Horace, fortunately a younger brother, lives with us, as master of the house. We are a most loving family, and as Mr. Moore says, we deserve to be a happy household, because we do not live to ourselves,—we permit others to come and partake of our happiness.

Emily Moore does not seem to remember how basely she was dragged to church and married against her will. She has a son.

Upon that son what affection is lavished! Mr. Moore can no longer boast that he is without feelings. If his son gets up a frown on his baby-brow, the whole house is ransacked for an antidote. He does not be-

grudge his wife's devotion to the child; he is content to be second in her estimation,—nay, more, he would be hurt if it were otherwise.

Mr. Clifford is dead, poor man! He owes his death to that evil habit of unwise parsimony. He spared to take a gig from the station that stormy wild night, and not only got drenched to the skin, but lost his way, and was out half the night. He never recovered. Indeed, Dr. Wilson was without hope from the first moment of seeing him,—only giving him a week's life.

Pamela and I have just written to John about remitting Mabel's money, as if, by no law, that either he or we could alter, he takes his father's place. Dear Mrs. Clifford has just been here,—so tearful, decently shocked at her husband's sudden death; but to us it was impossible, she did not try to conceal her gratification about John. "Poor dear Clifford, he died very easy at last, and thanked me for all my care. He

said something about John's taking his place, but feared he was wholly unfitted for the situation,—poor fellow! always so blind and mistaken about John. Oh, my dear young ladies! when I think that John is your agent, I don't know how to contain my joy and satisfaction, because John's whole heart is with his little ladies."

"But John must marry, Mrs. Clifford," interposed Pamela.

"Yes, Mrs. Warleigh, that's what I wish. I long to see John's children at my knee. But he never will listen when I mention marriage. No, says he, mother, no; what girl would give me her heart (and I must have a whole one), knowing that she can only have a fourth place in mine? My little ladies must always reign supreme there."

"But I think I know some one who would be glad of only the fifth place, Mrs. Clifford," I intimated.

"Well, well! perhaps so. John may

think himself lucky if he gets her for a wife. But let us say nothing, my dear ladies, otherwise we may just frighten John off. Some day, on a sudden, he will find himself thinking, 'What a nice, happy, blooming daughter Patty will make my mother;' and being of such a generous, impulsive nature, I reckon a great deal upon some such thought as this."

"Just the wife we should like for him," said Pamela. "No, no signs, Rose,—tell Mrs. Clifford, short as you like, but vivâ voce, that you approve."

"I love Pat-tie!"

"Good girl; now you may carry baby upstairs for me."

Mabel has not been told I can speak.

Another marriage! ah! I guessed that a year ago, when Otto tried to make monograms of two "o's,"—almost impracticable.

Miss Woodville is delighted.

Olympia will make a lovely peeress.

Surely Mrs. Home will thank God that the evening of her stormy life is so bright with the glow and splendour of a sun setting in highest glory. But she mourns that her father did not live to see the marriage fulfilled. It is thus that good worthy creatures disappoint one, by counting up a grievance to match with every good.

And so there is nothing more to say of the honours that Arthur won; is winning; of their return home; of our blessed, too short reunion, by our father's grave, in our home of Lovel-Leigh. Why speak of these, when in each heart that reads this book, scenes similar, in greater or less degree, must have their impressions indelibly fixed?

God is so good, if He scatters evil with one hand, to keep us humble and truehearted, this hand, the hand of justice and rebuke, closes from time to time. But the other, the right hand, of mercy, forgiveness, 326 THE LADIES OF LOVEL-LEIGH.

and pardon, is ever open, ever flinging, with lavish power, its blessings on the world.

So to all are accorded seasons in the journey of life, when the pulses quicken with hope, the eyes glisten with joy, the ear hears the glad-expected tidings, and the heart bounding with access of happiness fulfilled, goes straight to God, who alone can understand its unspeakable language.

Many as were the trials, unfitted to bear them, that overwhelmed them for a while, bountiful to overflowing have been the mercies that an Almighty Father has accorded the "Little Ladies of Lovel-Leigh."

THE END.

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